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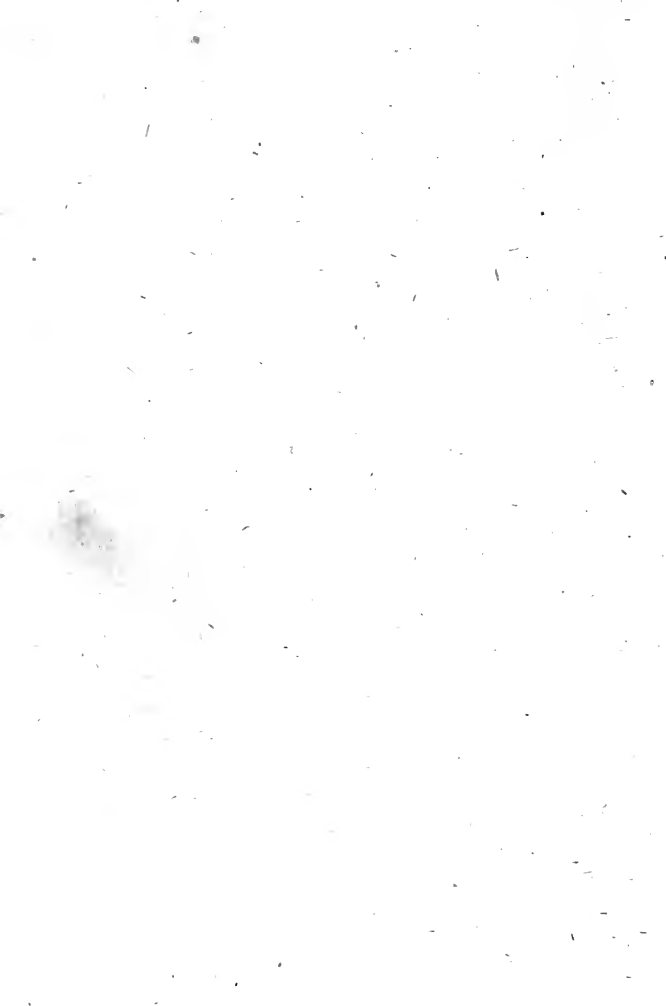
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D U D L E Y.

BY

MISS O'KEEFFE,

AUTHOR OF

PATRIARCHAL TIMES, OR THE LAND OF CANAAN;
ZENOBIA, QUEEN OF PALMYRA; &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

Printed by Strahan and Spottiswoode, Printers-Street;
FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1819.



TO THE PUBLIC.

THE many particular marks of approbation with which my two former Works, "Patriarchal Times" and "Zenobia," have been honoured, incline me to hope that they have in general been received with indulgence:—thus encouraged, I now present my third work, DUDLEY, as a candidate for public favour and protection.

ADELAIDE O'KEEFFE.

Chichester, Sussex.

May, 1819.

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<http://www.archive.org/details/dudley03okee>

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DUDLEY.

PART THE FIFTH.

LETTER XLI.

Don Zulvago, H. C. I. Conde d'Almeida, to Sir Eliot Howard.

At Sea, off Madagascar.

UNDER the idea, my friend Sir Eliot, that you received my last letter, informing you of my future designs, I will not recapitulate a mention of them, but only briefly notice the various circumstances which have hitherto frustrated my intentions of visiting your island on my way to England. You recollect my singular rencontre with a Spaniard, on board the vessel in which I was sailing for Calcutta, and which meeting I detailed to you in my last letter: firmly depending on the assurances of this countryman of mine,

that he had seen the object of my search, Mrs. Shelburne, not many months since at Kensington, near London; I took advantage of our hailing a homeward-bound English vessel to go on board her, resolving to give up all thoughts of India, and follow the present certain clue.

My plans were, however, frustrated, and on the same day; our ship was captured by a French frigate, and at this moment I am a prisoner of war, and bound to Rochefort. Captivity at such a time being to me particularly inconvenient, I have taken the necessary measures to procure my liberation; but as that period may be distant, I endeavour to occupy the passing day as agreeably as possible. Amongst other resources to beguile the hours, permit me to fulfil the promise given to you, and your friend the clergyman in England, (whose kind compliance with my wishes claim my best thanks,) by furnishing you with a slight and rapid sketch of the events of my early life, the consequences of which have left me the isolated being you have witnessed.

You must not, Sir Eliot, or Mr. Clonmore, for I address you both, judge of me by yourselves, or exclaim, during the perusal of the following pages, that such and such circumstances are incredible, and beyond the bounds of human nature ; that neither of you could have thus acted. To these objections, I have to remind you, that we sons of the South, more in particular those of Spain, are of a more fiery temperament, than those of northern nations ; that we are most capable of sublimer virtues, and, perhaps, of deeper crimes. Generally speaking, you have your passions better regulated, your discrimination cooler, than we have our's. Joined to the high-spirited and chivalrous notions which have ever distinguished us Castilians above all others, I have to plead my own individual nature, which, even from childhood, was strongly tinged with romance.

The watchful vigilance and tender care of parents, or of judicious tutors, might have in time corrected this defect ; but I was an orphan, and early my own master. Pride made me excel in every

athletic and gentlemanly exercise; and these acquired, I turned my attention to literature. Had I studied our own Cervantes more, and German authors less, my fate might have taken a different bias; but shunning those works which ridiculed my failing, and eagerly consulting such as flattered this pernicious taste, I became a wild and visionary enthusiast. — Closeting myself with romances instead of mixing in society, and setting up idols and objects of aversion in my mind, drawn from books instead of human life, when I was forced to appear as a member of the community, I saw every thing around me through a false medium, and instead of waiting for the results of nature, anticipated those I had learned to expect from art.

With these impressions, I decreed that my friend (when found) should regard none other in the world than myself; that we should be yoked like well matched steeds, and have but one common interest, one opinion, one taste, and one sole pursuit; — and yet having this view

of friendship, I formed an intention of contracting an early marriage!—My birth and connections were known, and my fortune was great; add to which, I was heir to various relatives, whose possessions in Spain, in Portugal, and South America were very considerable. At sixteen, I quitted my college and preceptors to join my regiment, then preparing, with our other forces, for the attack of Gibraltar. We were defeated; and on the definitive treaty of peace being signed the next year between Spain, Great Britain, France, and America, I travelled for some years, and then returned to Aranjuez to prosecute my studies, and to plunge deeper than ever into the errors of folly and enthusiasm.

As I observed before, my knowledge of the world was drawn from books; and having spent the whole of my boyhood at college, among either youths of my own age, or in the company of tutors and other masters; and having in my travels, shunned rather than courted

society, I had never hitherto mingled in female company. I had no female relative whatever, and was thus deprived of those advantages which result from an early association with children of the other sex. I had neither mother, aunt, sisters, or cousins ; and shut out, in consequence, from even the slightest acquaintance with feminine manners and tastes, my imagination became perverted by fiction, instead of being sobered by reality, and I was already nineteen before I had exchanged the most trivial compliment with any woman breathing.

As I have since reflected, my domestic tutor, a priest of the order of —, had his own views in preventing my accepting the invitations of many noble families who coveted my society. He extolled to me the advantages of celibacy, and more than once reminded me of the poverty of his order : but to all his arguments I urged my abhorrence of a single life, and without disguise gave him to understand that I should wish my funds to be enjoyed, not by any monas-

tic order whatever, but by my own lawful posterity.

But how or where was this future consort to be found, my friends ; for at the age of twenty-six, I had in my mind set up a standard of such perfect beauty and peculiar refinement, that it was very doubtful, whether such were in existence. I had, from my reading, imbibed the idea that a woman must be sought and wooed, and only won after a long and assiduous courtship on the side of the man : immaterial to me, I argued with myself, what labour during my suit I go through, what repulses, what disdain, what reserve and silence I suffer, provided I succeed at last. The siege must be long and arduous, nor difficulties nor danger shall deter me ; neither must any sign of capitulation appear on her side, until the time prescribed by me expires : — when I ask the love of a woman, it will be sufficient time to grant it me ; when I court her smiles, let her then, and not till then, smile upon me. Petrarch, in the course of years, only once touched the hand of Laura ; some other lover

(equally absurd, I may at this day add) was contented to kiss the hem of his mistress's robe; and the female on whom my choice falls, although she must love me with ardour, and only me, and for myself alone, (neither birth or wealth entering into her consideration,) must, to fix my love, with unparalleled wariness conceal her own: the virgin snow of modesty must cover the blush of affection; the averted look of indifference, shade the melting beam of tenderness; and the chilling voice of restraint, smother the thrilling accent of preference and love.

And thus I continued arguing in my own mind:—yes, my future wife must in all things be the direct contrast to myself. Low and feminine in stature, her complexion, unlike that of my charming countrywomen, dazzlingly white, (for immaterial to me of what nation she is born;) the roses shall blow on her cheeks and her lips; her hair, soft and light, boast a natural wave and curl, and dark lashes, and long, shade the deep blue of her modest eyes. The limbs gracefully

formed ; the hands and feet perfection ; the voice soft ; the manners mild and gentle ; the education sober and religious.

Well, my friends, could you think it possible that this idol of my fancy were in existence ? and yet it was. Such a being as I have described was Gabrielle, the only child of Gustavus Engelhardt, a native of Saxony, at that time a superannuated Lieutenant of Dragoons in the pay of Spain, and for some years living at Aranjuez on a pension bestowed on him by the crown.

This brave officer had served under my father, the late Conde d'Almeida, in the United States of America, and had been taken prisoner by the British forces and sent to England, where he married an English woman, who shortly after their removal to Dresden died, leaving him this daughter. He then committed the child to the care of a Miss Shelburne, her maternal aunt, residing near London, and entered again into the service of Spain ; but, becoming disabled, retired from active employment. He was at this period settled in a cottage on the banks

of the Tagus, accompanied by his daughter, and attended by a single domestic, an old woman, a native of Ireland, of the name of Desmond, who had with reluctance brought Gabrielle to Spain, on the summons of her father, and who was now equally unwilling to part with her.

You, Sir Eliot, have seen the picture of Gabrielle ; believe me, the painter was no flatterer ; you, Mr. Clonmore, have not seen the miniature to which I allude ; but if you can recall to recollection what Lady Alford was at sixteen, you may form some idea of the person of this object of my fondest attachment. The Countess, even at the period I first saw her, bore the strongest resemblance to Gabrielle, particularly when she was serious or suffering ; but when whim and gaiety were the geniuses of the moment, the likeness wholly disappeared.

The early and trivial circumstances which attended the progress of my passion, are unworthy of detail. But I beseech you to bear in mind, that in silent

dignity, in feminine reserve, and in cold restraint, this young girl realized my most sanguine wishes; and, indeed, so much so, that I at last began to doubt whether I should be ever able to thaw a heart which seemed incapable of love. Guided, however, by certain infallible signs of sensibility, I resolved to persevere; — which signs were derived from her conduct to her father: here affection was legitimate, therefore unconstrained. The tenderness with which she waited upon him; her complacency at all times, and sprightliness when listening to the accounts of his warfare, (giving pleasure by proving that she received it;) her caution and her prudent care of him in their walks, for he was much disabled, all gave me the certainty that she could love, that is, when the object was sanctioned either by nature, or became thus by the holy rites of marriage; and I agreed in my own mind to dispense with even the slightest token of partiality, until I should draw near the period when such would be my claim.

Thus passed many months; Engelhardt the father receiving me when I came from college or off duty, (being one of the royal guard at the palace,) with a degree of interest and candour, that was peculiarly gratifying; and the daughter still with modesty and reserve. He, as you may conclude, talked over my father's battles and his own, in their American and Flemish campaigns; to which I ever listened with patience; whilst Gabrielle sat in a distant corner of the room, either knitting or spinning: but when, like Desdemona, she was called away to attend her family affairs jointly with her favourite old servant, my attention certainly did wander, neither were my answers or my questions as applicable as usual.

Frequently, on entering the cottage, I have found the old soldier settling himself to sleep in his high and ample elbow chair; on such occasions I used to remark, that Gabrielle had ever recourse to her spinning, in preference to any other employment; the buzzing sound of the turning wheel seeming to lull him as effectually as would a waterfall; whilst

the arrangement of the flax, and the bustling motion attending the process itself, appeared to engross her whole attention.

Fearful of waking him, I generally, at such times, took down a book, or opened a map, and waited patiently until he awoke. One morning, when thus engaged, I by chance looked up, casting a careless eye to the further end of the apartment, — and need I describe to you, married men, the sudden sensation I experienced, bordering almost on rapture, when I met the soft blue eyes of Gabrielle fixed on me, with an expression not to be misunderstood. Any other man would immediately have acted as sense, as delicacy, as justice and humanity pointed out: I, on the contrary, adhering to the maxim I had laid down, though almost maddened with pleasure at this unequivocal proof of what I most wished, fixed my eyes upon her with a sort of a vacant look, at the same time twisting my lips into a low whistle of the march I had just heard on the parade, whilst both my hands were employed in opening and unfolding a large atlas, which I then affected to ex-

amine. — I stole one more glance at the deeply-crimsoned face which hung upon her bosom, as her fingers now moved rapidly to and fro ; and Gustavus soon after awoke.

Though no favourite of fortune, for this hardy veteran had nothing to subsist upon but his trifling pension, (and yet he was descended from one of the most illustrious families of Saxony,) such was the independent spirit of his nature, bordering on fierceness, that had I, or any other person in Spain (excepting the Royal Family, or Prince Godoy,) attempted to serve him in any shape whatever, by increasing his income, by adding occasionally to his domestic comforts, or even by sending a tribute of friendship, in some elegant, or perhaps useless ornament, it would have been at the risk of our lives, or of his ; for presents of every kind his poverty made him regard as insults.

He received me, from the consciousness of his own birth, as his equal ; and

whilst I was contented to walk in and out of his house, to take a cup of coffee, or to share in the fruits of his little garden, and amuse him by relating the passing events of the day, and improve myself by listening to those that happened before I was born, he was happy in receiving me as a visitor; but one step further on my side, (making him feel that I was rich, and he was poor,) would have shut his doors for ever against me. Such was the character of Gustavus Engelhardt, the blunt, the honest, the brave and deserving soldier.

During the first week of our acquaintance, having brought him, from the palace gardens, a large nosegay of beautiful flowers, of which he was fond, he made some jesting remark on the *elegance* of the coarse earthenware cups of Segovia, into which Gabrielle distributed them to ornament the room; when I, at that time not aware of the real character of the man, quitted the house, and returned in less than half an hour, followed by

two soldiers, carrying between them, in a wicker case, the most valuable porcelain vase that Aranjuez could produce, and which I could only obtain by outbidding the Prince of Asturias, for whom it was designed.

Having directed the men to place it on the little table in the centre of the room, I looked at Gabrielle, pleased and conscious; but was quickly recalled by the sound of Engelhardt's voice: turning to me, with stern gravity, he enquired, was that vase mine?

"It is now your's," I replied.

"And did I commission you to procure it for me, Conde d'Almeida? If I did, and thereby squandered five years, at least, of my pension, I deserve to visit the debtors' prison at Madrid." — On which I gave him to understand, that this vase was a small token of my friendship.

Rising, with a firm and military air, he walked, or rather halted over to the table, and commanded the soldiers to take it away; whilst I, smiling at his scruples,

desired them to leave it. The dispute was soon decided.

Although the two men had affected to stagger under the weight of the vase, Engelhardt deliberately grasped it in both his arms, and lifting it from the table, dashed it down upon the stone floor. It was shivered to pieces. He then resumed his seat ; and having first ordered the men to clear his room of the rubbish, he put a segar in his mouth, and stirred the embers of the fire with his crutch.

The next day I ventured to pay him my usual visit, when he received me with his accustomed frankness and cordiality. Encouraged by which return of kindness, I hazarded offering another present, and with great humility produced about a score of segars, which, being in reality a trifle, I considered as not likely to be refused.

“ If you persist, Don Isidore, in forcing them on me,” he said, “ I thrust them into the fire ;” — and he was as good as his word.

Seeing that I looked hurt at this action, and I really did feel more disappointed at this proof of blunt independence than at the other, which had something of the sublime in it, he softened both his voice and manner of address, when adding, " My good Carlos, when we once doubt of the impropriety of an action, we are not far from committing it. The first step is every thing. You know the terms on which I allow your visits here; and must be aware, that it would be no small loss to me to be deprived of your society. As the son of my old Colonel, you will be ever heartily welcome under my roof; but, respecting presents, be they a tobacco stopper, or a diamond sword, I utterly refuse all you, or any man, can offer; and on your persisting, I still settle the dispute at once, by destroying the subject of it."

From that hour I perfectly understood the man I had to deal with; and the doubt came across me, whether he might not have an equal repugnance to *give* presents, as to *receive* them: in that case, thought I, what become of my

hopes of obtaining my beloved Gabrielle? Determined to sound him on that head, without committing myself, I, one day when we were alone together, mentioned a report I had heard, of a rich merchant of St. Domingo, or Hispaniola, of the name of Sobrino, having become a suitor to his daughter. He candidly acknowledged that such was the case; and added, " All I can do is to advise my child; she herself must decide." Thus were my fears of his keeping her himself, by preventing her marrying, removed; and I considered I had at least an equal chance with my rival of obtaining her, when I should decide on asking.

Don Manuel de Sobrino was a widower, but without family, who, having great property in Spanish America, and the West India Islands, had lately purchased a territory near Madrid, the court of which had granted him letters of nobility. He had accidentally seen Gabrielle, as she was walking, and he riding, in the *Calle de la Reyna*; and having discovered that her family were military, and noble, had offered her his hand. He had already

been twice rejected ; but he still persevered, and had been heard to declare, by some of my brother officers, that he would never give over the pursuit until she were married.

I had better opportunity than had Engelhardt, of making enquiries into the character of this Sobrino, and soon learned that his first wife had died of a broken heart : that he was proud, harsh, and cruel, a domestic tyrant, selfish and ostentatious. This report (except feeling regret at the turpitude of any fellow being) gave me little concern on Gabrielle's account, so sincerely did I regard her as my own future wife, conscious of my everlasting attachment to her ; and every day becoming more convinced that it was mutual.

I therefore considered it as an unnecessary exposure, my relating to either father or daughter the accounts I had heard relative to this man, which, had my intentions towards Gabrielle been otherwise, I should have thought it my duty to have done ; and, from that hour, I took a sort of malicious delight in talk-

ing of him in their presence. It was evident that neither Gustavus nor his child had any knowledge of the evil reports in circulation respecting Sobrino, as his age seemed to be the only obstacle in Engelhardt's opinion to an union with Gabrielle.

“ He is certainly much too old for my girl,” remarked the veteran ; “ but I am not young, and my pension dies with me. I wish, before I leave the world, to see her in the protection of an honest man.” And as he spoke he turned to where she sat. Thus, from the position in which I was placed, I had a full view of father and daughter, without being seen ; and I watched both with an emotion, of which, my good friends, you may, knowing my sentiments, perhaps, form some idea. Gabrielle blushed deeply, and the spinning-wheel certainly took a retrograde movement ; whilst, in the face of Gustavus, might be read the fondest affection, mingled with fear and pity. On his appealing to her, whether she did not think the noble merchant rather too much advanced in years, she

appeared to make a violent exertion to summon all her fortitude, and, with apparent composure, answered,

“ My father, I have already and repeatedly told you, your wishes shall be mine : tell me to see Don Sobrino no more, and I obey ; assure me that it is your desire I should marry him to-morrow, and I consent.”

These words, as I observed before, were spoken with calmness, and her looks were equally serene ; when, at the same instant, the door of the cottage, after a gentle tap, opened, and a person came in. — Gabrielle uttered a faint cry, a deadly paleness came over her countenance, she started from her chair, and rushed into a little vestibule, which, concealed from the parlour, opened into the garden.

I hastily followed, and unobserved, Gustavus being occupied in receiving Don Sobrino, for it was himself. One glance at his mean and diminutive stature, his coarse and shaggy head, his dark and ill-boding countenance, was sufficient, and I hastily averted my sight.

What followed was quick and transient as the flash of lightning. Gabrielle fancied he was pursuing her; and with the most undissembled tokens of aversion, and, indeed, horror, suddenly turned, and, with averted face, held out her arms, as if to repulse him, when she saw me! This is one of the few moments wherein an angel from heaven lets fall a drop of balm into the cup of life!

For the first time I touched her, I received her in my arms, I pressed her fondly to my bosom, whispering, "My own, beloved Gabrielle!—mine, only mine." I saw her tears; I felt her involuntary pressure; I heard her sobs; and the murmur of my name, "Isidore! Carlos! Dear, dear Carlos!" At the same instant she recovered herself, tore from my grasp, and disappeared at a small door, which led to their apartments above.

Would you not imagine, my friends, that after such a disclosure on her part, (however involuntarily,) aware as you

are of my own sentiments towards her, that nothing but death, on one part or the other, could prevent an union taking place, especially if we notice the regard in which I was held by the father? And yet, can you credit this proof of the fatal tendency of my pernicious course of reading!—on my return to my quarters in the palace, I ruminated, alone, on the preceding circumstances, and settled in my own mind, that as jealousy was the strongest proof of love, it was absolutely necessary, before I should come to an explanation with either my beloved or her father, to appear jealous of my rival, and thereby extort on her part some purposed token of tenderness, which, hitherto, I had received only from accident. Here, you will say, are sentiments and wishes diametrically opposite to what I had early professed. True; but such is the incongruity of the human mind, when swayed wholly by passion and prejudice.

Determined, by studied reserve and indifference on my side, to produce on

her's surprise and mortification, which was to end in a full explanation on both sides, of a long and secret attachment, when Gustavus was to be applied to by me to sanction and bless our union, I went to his house the next day. I found him reading, and alone. On my enquiring for Gabrielle, he called her, and so sudden was her appearance, that it was evident she had only started from the room at my entrance. I saw the down-cast look, and conscious blush of confusion and timidity ; but, bent upon my own plans, after the first salutations of the day, I took no further notice of her ; and, some time after, asked Gustavus, carelessly, had he made up his mind to receive the Domingo merchant for his son-in-law ?

For the first time, I observed the veteran look embarrassed, and as if unable to meet my eye. He threw a log of wood on the fire, handled his crutch, settled his wooden leg, and then said, " Don Sobrino, I allow, is most persevering, Carlos ; — indeed he will take no denial."

“ And is it possible,” I asked, “ that you could sacrifice your daughter (Gabrielle had again quitted the room,) to that man, who, compared to her, is aged, and most hideous?”

“ It is not always,” said Engelhardt, “ the youngest and handsomest men who make the best husbands, my good Captain. Gabrielle, it is true, is only sixteen, and a pleasing girl ; but she has no pretensions to choose : she must feel grateful when selected ; and as she has professed her determination not to go into a convent, I should feel happy to see her married, and thus saved from the miseries attending the situation of a single woman, young, beautiful, and unprotected,—for wealth alone is protection. I am old and infirm, I cannot look forward to many years. Here is the protection of a husband, a home, and independence offered her ; she refuses all these, I allow ; but no man ought to be kept in suspense, neither shall Sobrino : in three days she has, in my presence, solemnly promised to give him a final answer ; and, at my request, he has also engaged

to abide by that answer. He will, therefore, at the end of that period, become her husband, or desist ever after from pursuing her."

"I think," I replied, "that Gabrielle should have come to no such terms with this man; but unconditionally have rejected him. Once known that he is finally dismissed, other suitors cannot fail offering themselves. — Gabrielle is still very young, and every day increases her beauty, and the admiration of all who see her. I have heard several officers of my corps protest, that, had they the means of supporting a wife, no woman on earth should have the preference over your daughter."

"Silence!" said Gustavus, in a stern voice, and with a gloomy, sullen frown. Then looking at me full in the face, which he had not hitherto done, he continued, "Do you, Conde d'Almeida, think to amuse me, by relating the obliging offers of your corps? Is my daughter put up for sale in your mess-room, Don Isidore?"

I felt abashed ; and secretly owned that my frivolous impertinence, and insincerity, richly merited the indignant warmth with which the honest soldier treated me. I endeavoured to apologise ; but he took his crutch, and in silence quitted the room. Little did I then imagine, that I had seen him for the last time !

This was the signal for my departure, and I seemed to tread on air. “ Now,” thought I, “ the day is my own. Gabrielle loves me, and it is plain her father is in the secret : he waits for me to speak, and I speak to-morrow. To-morrow decides my fate. A long perspective of happiness opens upon me ; and, in three days, Gabrielle, instead of being wedded to age, ugliness, and tyranny, becomes the wife of her fond, her beloved, and loving Carlos !”

Don Zulvago in continuation.

Early the next day I went to Engelhardt's, and, for the first time, found his

seat by the fire-side vacant. Neither was Gabrielle in the room. Supposing they were in the garden, I was proceeding thither, when accosted by Desmond, the old female attendant, who, in her broken Spanish, gave me to understand that her master had been taken ill in the night, and that his daughter was attending on him. Determined not to leave the house without seeing one or the other, I sent up a message to that purpose in my broken English, a few sentences of which I had learned from Gabrielle, who spoke it with still more perfection than she did either German or Spanish.

A few minutes after, the dear girl appeared, and, from her countenance, I judged her father's illness was not of an alarming nature, which, on enquiry, she confirmed, adding, it was rather languor than ailment, and that he was now asleep. Having answered all my questions, and decidedly rejected my offer of sending to the city for medical assistance, she was leaving me, when, luckily, a heavy shower of rain came down, accompanied with thunder and lightning,

which, had I wanted any excuse to prolong my stay, offered the most reasonable.

“ You can find amusement here until the rain is over, Don Isidore,” said the blushing Gabrielle, pointing to the bookshelf; “ and so good-by for to-day. My father, I do not imagine, will come down stairs until to-morrow.”

“ By your own account, Gabrielle,” I replied, “ your father is, at present, asleep. You can, therefore, spare me a few moments of your company, as I have something of importance to communicate. The hand I had taken, and still held, now trembled in mine, on which I let it go, and sat down in a chair, near the little table in the centre of the room. She took up her knitting, and seemingly scarce conscious of what she was doing, placed herself opposite to me. Every thing on my part was done and said to make her raise her eyes to mine, but the attempt was vain. I played on the table with the knitting pins, pushed the ball of cotton with my foot to the farther end of the room, asked was her clock right, when, as it struck,

I took out my watch to compare the hour; remarked that the elbows of the large chair of her father required new covering, and took down the cage of her favourite bullfinch, and spoke to it, and fed it.

Still, statue-like, she sat, and only replied to my remarks with a sort of conscious blushing smile, apparently unable to meet my looks. Oh, with what passionate ardour I gazed upon her in silence, as she continued her work with the most perverse industry! contemplating, at my leisure, the most beautiful and interesting object in creation, a lovely and innocent girl, her whole heart filled with the tender emotions of a *first* passion, and a passion for *myself*! — “Yes, beloved Gabrielle,” (such were my secret reflections at this moment,) “yes, thou dear one, *my* first love, the future blessing of my existence, my wife that will be soon, one word more on my part, and the barrier of restraint is broken down, and for ever, between us, and we shall then acknowledge that each is the owner of the other’s heart!”

“ Supposing,” I continued, debating in my own mind, “ I were to delay our mutual happiness yet longer, that I might gather the strongest proofs of attachment before I declare myself: or rather, ought I not to prove that her fortitude, and sense of female prudence, is yet stronger than inclination. What if I were to put her, for one moment, on the rack of doubt and suspense; and, when human nature shall be able to bear no more, to throw off the mask of duplicity at once, and own myself her future husband.”

With these *worthy* intentions, my friends, formed at the instant, I fixed my eyes full upon her charming countenance, in which the softest, the purest sensibility, was still predominant, and suddenly remarked, “ Have you heard, Gabriëlle, that our regiment is ordered to Trinidad?” (such was really the case.) Pale consternation spread itself over each lovely feature, which increased as I continued, “ In a few days, it will be on its march to Lisbon for embarkation. Many of my brother officers, who, I imagine, have

some powerful attractions in Spain, regret their departure. I, on the contrary, leave no one to regret mine. I have no one to mourn my absence, or to wish my stay."

I stopped, on perceiving a faint tinge rush to her cheek, and her nether lip tremble. Oh, my friends, had she at that moment but raised her eyes to mine, conviction must have come to her heart, for I felt that all my soul was depicted in my countenance: she would then have read, regardless of my words, all that the fondest admiration and love could express; and what unutterable misery we should both have been spared. But my unwarrantable conduct, my hypocrisy, deserved its punishment, and I *was* punished. With my own hand I held up the conductor, in defiance, and the thunderbolt fell upon me.

"I suppose," I added, with a suppressed voice, (and had she not been so very young, so truly inexperienced, so artless, and diffident of her own attractions, my voice alone might have led her to guess the truth,)—"I suppose, that

should I go with my regiment, on my return I shall find you the chief pride and treasure of this rich merchant, Sobrino. He may, perhaps, remove with you to St. Domingo : in that case, we may chance to meet again in that quarter of the world."

Could you, Sir Eliot, at that moment have seen my poor unfortunate victim, the only object on earth I loved, writhing beneath the torture I took delight in inflicting ! Here, indeed, I beheld before me, realised, the very idol of my imagination, the extremes of passion and of feminine propriety, united, at one and the same moment, in youth and beauty ! Here was tenderness and dignity, love, and unbroken silence !

I watched, and with a fond smile, the varying countenance, the quickly heaving, the panting bosom, the suppressed tears, that indescribable shrinking into herself, as wishing the earth to open and hide her from me ; — I watched all this ; I understood it all ; and yet, barbarian as I was ! I could continue my unmanly, my ungenerous artifice !

I rose, and took out my watch, saying, "The vanguard are to be in march by four o'clock; *should I* accompany them, I have a few preparations to make." (Here was equivocation! For such would actually have been the case, had I entertained no prospect of success in my suit to Gabrielle.) "Well," I added, "I must now bid you farewell; but whether we are, or are not, destined to meet again, my fair friend, rely upon it, you and your father have no sincerer well-wisher on earth than myself. — May *he* be blessed with long life; and *you*, my sweet Gabrielle, be happy. — Not one word to wish me a prosperous voyage! Not one kind farewell to Isidore! to Carlos!"

I stretched out my hand to receive her's; she rose, extended it, and at the very instant in which I clasped that dear and precious hand in mine, and was on the point of drawing her towards me, of snatching her to my bosom with a full confession of love, she fell at my feet, apparently a lifeless corpse! Thus at the very moment that I fancied she was be-

coming mine to all eternity, we were forever separated !

In vain it was that I madly flung myself on the ground beside her ; that I lifted the cold and pale, the beautiful, the insensible figure on my knee ; that I pressed her in my arms, kissed her white lips, and closed eyelids ; and in all the wildness of remorse and despair, called her my wife, my beloved, my fond and tender Gabrielle. No signs whatever of life appeared, and in a state little short of distraction, I summoned Desmond to her aid. The astonishment and grief of this woman may be imagined ; but with my unintelligible English and her Spanish, we neither could understand each other, until she pointed to the outward door, when I guessed she wished my departure, that she might have recourse to the proper methods of restoring her young mistress to sensibility.

For upwards of an hour I walked to and fro on the banks of the Tagus, my

eyes perpetually turned towards the cottage, waiting until I judged I might be readmitted; but never from that moment, until seventeen years after, did I cross that same threshold! — On being denied entrance, and repeatedly, I returned home, and sent letters both to Engelhardt and Gabrielle, confessing my youthful error, and imploring their forgiveness, laying before both the true state of my affections for many months past, and intreating to be considered as his future son-in-law, adding, that unless Gabrielle were my wife, I should for ever renounce matrimony.

All my letters, and they were many, were returned unopened: the truth was, they were considered as containing the mere forms of farewell, and enquiries after the health of both father and daughter; and as such, considering the apparent duplicity of my conduct, they were not thought worthy even of inspection.

Determined at all events to see one or other of the family, and that immediately, the next night I went towards Engel-

hardt's, my mind in a state of frenzy on recollecting that two of the three days were already elapsed, since my rival Sobrino had received the full promise of both father and daughter, that within that time she should become his, or he for ever renounce his suit. — “To-morrow is the day!” I exclaimed, “to-morrow! No, it is impossible, she never, never can wed him; let her, if such be her will, reject me, and I have deserved my punishment; but let me not think she can become the wife of that man.”

Doubt, jealousy, and despair, enflaming my brain, and nerving my arm, I was resolved, if still denied admittance, to enter the house by force, and compel them, at least, to give me a hearing. — Alas! my dear friends, the tide of my good fortune and happiness was turned; I had sported with opportunity, and it was gone for ever!

The night was dark; I had long wandered in the palace gardens, plunging in its solitary groves, to prevent my being watched and followed by any of the officers of my acquaintance; and about

two hours before midnight, I proceeded towards the humble cottage of my beloved. As I have already mentioned, it was situated under a lofty grove of elms, within a few yards of the Tagus ; from which it was separated by a terrace and flower-garden, surrounded by a stone balustrade.

In order to gain the back of the house, and thereby have a better chance of admission, as the door on that side I knew was often left open, and frequently, even during the night, I climbed this balustrade ; and whether from the dashing of the water from a small *jet d'eau* in the garden, it was slippery, or that my agitation rendered my footsteps less firm than usual, I know not, but I lost my balance, and fell into the river !

A month after this circumstance, I found myself still confined to my apartments in the palace of Aranjuez, slowly recovering from the effects of fever and delirium. It appears, when falling into the water I had struck my head against

the stone railing; had most probably sunk, risen again, and floated with the stream; for the next morning by day-break I was found by a muleteer, near the little island to the north of the palace.

The physicians who attended me had, as you may imagine, discovered the true state of my mind; when, on my being able to hear it, they with caution and delicacy took upon themselves to make known to me the events that had taken place during my illness. I learned that Gabrielle was married, and to Sobrino, and on the very day specified; and that they had quitted, together with Engelhardt, the neighbourhood of Aranjuez, and were then at Madrid.

Thus was this inestimable jewel placed in my hand, and thus most wickedly and wantonly had I flung it from me! Had the punishment fallen on myself alone, I think I might have borne it, and with fortitude; but my one error brought with it a train of most dreadful

consequences : nay, to this very hour is my victim suffering from its effects. The remainder of my narrative shall be brief.

After about three years spent by Sobrino in the most profuse and boundless extravagance, endeavouring to outvie even royalty in splendour, and in which ambitious folly his wife was unable to restrain him, his affairs became deranged, when he removed to Hamburgh, in order the better to carry on various speculations of great magnitude : these failing, the savage ferocity of his temper became ungovernable ; and too late did poor Engelhardt find, that from a false principle of honour in binding his daughter to accept or reject this man within a limited time, he had virtually sacrificed her to hatred and misery. The honest soldier had prevailed on himself, at the urgent and solemn entreaties of Gabrielle, to remain under one roof with her, and never to quit her whilst either lived. He saw what comfort and protection it was in his power still to bestow upon his ruined child, and from that time resolved that no provocation on the part of the

tyrannical husband, should induce him to break the promise he had given her.

Shortly after their removal to Ham-
burgh, however, Gabrielle was deprived
by death of this dearly beloved parent ;
an infant daughter, born in Spain, was
now her only consolation ; for the con-
duct of Sobrino became such as rendered
him the outcast of society : his patent of
nobility was withdrawn, his mercantile
speculations ended in total ruin, and a
pistol completed the business.

During these events, you will, my
good friends, naturally wish to know
what had become of me. On my recovery
from a long and dangerous illness, (for
the news of the marriage of Gabrielle
produced a relapse,) I quitted Spain for
Italy ; in which country, and in those
of Swisserland, Hungary, Poland, and
Russia, and in both the Cape de Verd
and the Canary islands, I spent above
four years ; but, as you will also imagine,
I was still served by active and faithful
agents, who constantly informed me of
the proceedings of those so nearly con-

nected with my feelings. I attempted, more than once, by means of secret friends and correspondents, to uphold the sinking credit of Sobrino; but mines of wealth could not have saved him from ruin, his proceedings being those of a madman, rather than even a daring speculator: and, as I before observed, he perished by his own hand, leaving his widow, and her daughter Victorina, overwhelmed in debt and misery.

I was at the court of Vienna at the time, and indeed in the palace, waiting in the anti-chamber to be introduced to the emperor and his family, when the express arrived from my Hamburgh friend, acquainting me of the death of Sobrino.

I quitted the place the same instant; and, after about twenty minutes preparation, took charge of an express to the Archduke Charles, as the best safeguard in those times of republican warfare, and which also ensured the utmost possible expedition; and set out for that spot, which, as I supposed, contained

the object still dearest to me on earth. She had removed from Hamburgh the preceding week, and was gone, with her child and Desmond, (the servant who had been with her from her own infancy,) to England. After the delay necessary to procure passports, I followed, and traced her to London. Here I was unfortunately deceived, by an account of her having accompanied this woman to her native country, Wexford, in Ireland, and I went thither.

A fruitless search of many months succeeded, in which I was attended by an Englishman, as a guide, and also a teacher of your language, which, at that time, I spoke very imperfectly, and could not at all write. I found, it is true, that the female servant had been over to see her relations, but was not accompanied by her mistress, who, during her absence, had remained in the neighbourhood of Tunbridge Wells. On receiving this intelligence, I purposed instantly quitting Ireland; but, in the interim, war having been declared between Spain and England, I was made

prisoner, and, by the Alien Act, sent out of the kingdom.

Once more in my native country, I wrote to my agents to ascertain the residence of Sobrino's widow, (I had caused all his debts to be discharged,) and to supply her with remittances, until I could venture a letter directly to herself, which it was impossible to do until I was assured of her abode. The course of correspondence is, as you well know, so very uncertain in time of war, that, though I sent duplicates of my letters, and by various channels, it was a considerable time before I received any answers; and when they did arrive, they were merely to inform me, that *Mrs. Shelburne*, the maternal family name that Donna Sobrino had assumed during her residence in England, had gone to Hispaniola, in order to endeavour to recover some property of her late husband, and secure it to her child.

A few days after, I sailed from Corunna for the West Indies, and landed in safety at Port au Prince, when I found on enquiry, that Gabrielle had been there, that the daughter had been put in possession of the wrecks of its father's fortune, (not more than four or five hundred pounds sterling,) and that they had sailed in a neutral flag back to England.

This was to me prohibited land, and I returned to Spain, having only now, in order to accomplish my wishes, to trust to faithful agency. Many months were passed by me in the most anxious state of suspense; during which, if I must acknowledge thus far, the only moments of peace or happiness I enjoyed, were when diverting the noble and magnificent stream of my wealth, into numberless little channels, where most wanted, to refresh the verdure, to irrigate the land, and to assist the orchard and the pasture. I sought, I found distress in every shape, and when administering relief, suffered no medium between myself and the object relieved: I employed

no agent therefore, but for the time, associated myself with obscurity, in order to avoid imposition ; from which practice, I obtained the name of the invisible benefactor.

Two years were thus spent in wandering through my native land and Portugal, and on foot, and without a servant : my ears, I trust, ever open to the voice of complaint, as was my hand to comfort and defend. But, still, no object could ever find its way to my heart, in the way of love. *That* still cherished its first affection ; and incessantly did I behold that one form, under all its various and enchanting expressions. With me, the image of Gabrielle bore the appearance of eternal beauty. I could imagine no change in her : I could not even allow for the alteration that years, and distress, must have made in her appearance. She offered herself perpetually to my imagination, and ever blooming, gifted with immortal youth.

At length I received the most minute accounts, from a friend I had trusted,

and whom I had commissioned to watch over the safety of her and her child, and to promote my interests with the former ; and these accounts were such as caused me the most poignant distress. It appeared he had seen Donna Sobrino, and had followed strictly my directions. With every possible respect, and attention, he had offered her resources, and advised her immediate return to Spain ; but she had decisively rejected every tender made to her in my name, and persisted in remaining in the humble abode she had chosen, which, as she said, best suited her moderate finances. The few hundreds saved from Sobrino's West India property, were dedicated by her to the sole purpose of procuring masters to perfect her daughter in those talents which might enable her, hereafter, to earn her own livelihood.

You may imagine the grief these reports gave me ; but I had no resource but patience. I still trusted that the perseverance of my friend, who was on the spot, and to whom I wrote as frequently as possible, might yet overcome

her scruples, and I again commenced a wanderer.

I travelled through the States of Barbary and Algiers, and sent many redeemed captives back to Europe. From thence I again visited Madeira, and the Canaries, still accompanied by my English travelling companion, with whom I studied your language ; and it was at this period I first became acquainted with your worthy countryman, Mr. Balfour. After a short stay there, understanding from my English agent, that all hope of removing Donna Sobrino's objections, either to return to Spain, or to suffer me to come to England to her, or even to receive a letter from me, were at an end, I became regardless of my future welfare, and considered myself little better than a friendless outcast : still under the idea, however, that it was more agreeable, in the eye of Heaven, to endeavour to benefit my fellow-creatures, by suffering them to participate in my wealth, than by either shutting myself up in a monastery, or even building abbeys and convents. I spent the next three years in

wandering through the world. I visited America and India, and trust in the bounteous Giver of all good, that I established a fair name on whatsoever spot I visited.

I returned to Teneriffe in the year 1802, at which period, Sir Eliot, you and I first met. I certainly could not fail of sympathising in your sorrows; yet, on comparison, I considered your's as light compared to my own. We had each lost the beloved of our souls, it was true; but your's, I remarked, had been taken from you by the will of the Divine Creator; your loss was irremediable; your case was hopeless; and was therefore capable of amelioration, (to use a paradox,) not to mention your superior blessing in having a child. I, on the contrary, had lost my treasure by my own guilty folly, and the object still lived: therefore, whilst it lived, I was enduring the torment of Tantalus, one day hoping, the next despairing of ever recovering it. You were in possession

of relatives ; I could not boast of one. You were, still, a father, a brother ; I was an isolated being, connected to earth by not one tie of affinity.

On your complete recovery, I quitted Teneriffe ; and on the very day that the definitive treaty of peace was signed at Amiens, landed in England, determined that nothing now, whatever, should prevent my obtaining an interview with Gabrielle. Judge my consternation, and sorrow, when on applying to my secret friend concerning her, I heard that she had taken advantage of the peace to quit the country, (conceiving it possible that I should act as I had,) and that with such caution and secrecy, that no trace of her was to be found.

I applied to the English police, to the Spanish ambassador, to various magistrates, in order to endeavour to find her, but all was in vain. The only relief afforded me, was on visiting the humble place of her abode, in which she had passed her days in penury and sorrow, to

receive from those of the neighbourhood testimonies of her most exemplary character.

War was renewed, as you may remember, the following May, when I was forced to preserve my liberty by quitting England. Unwilling to return to Spain, certain that Gabrielle would never choose that spot as possible to hide herself from me, I returned to Teneriffe, where I found you, happy in the society of Mrs. Grantley, and your charming little girl. I did not, as you may remember, stay long with you at that time, for, having received intelligence from Geneva, that led me to imagine Mrs. Shelburne had taken refuge in Switzerland, I repaired thither, but had the mortification of a disappointment, in pursuing from stage to stage a fugitive wife, and her two female domestics. From thence I made my way to Genoa, designing there to take shipping for the Canaries; but when I came within sight of the coast of Portugal, and was a witness to the battle of Trafalgar, — that sight made me feel I was still a soldier — that the spark of pa-

triotism was not wholly quenched in my bosom! I landed at Lisbon, proceeded to Madrid, assumed my title of Almeida, and obtained leave to raise a regiment on my estates in Old Castile. We fought at Maida, — you Englishmen know the event.

In 1807 I quitted Spain, and went to Madeira; but, the December following, that island being put in possession of England, I once more returned to Teneriffe and Euphorbia, where I found your society augmented by the arrival of the amiable Mrs. Clonmore, and your promising Dudley.

The short time I spent with you at that period, were so truly gratifying to my feelings, that I had designed to pass a much longer period with you; when, on the very day of your sister Lady Alford's arrival, I received a letter from a friend at Lisbon, (another of my agents,) which stated, on the authority of private intelligence from Bayonne, that Gabrielle had, with her daughter,

taken up her residence, long since, in that city, where they still lived, retired and respected.

This intelligence appeared to me more certain than any I had hitherto received; and, had my affection required any stimulus, the sight of Lady Alford would have thus acted on my heart; — I can scarcely describe to you the contending emotions with which, unperceived, I watched that noble, that beautiful countenance, so strongly resembling that of my lost Gabrielle.

I quitted Euphorbia, and repaired to Bayonne. Here were spent, in the most incessant yet fruitless search, upwards of six weeks; and, after repeated disappointments, I found my agent at Lisbon had been led astray by the description he had received of a young widow and her sister, who, it appears, had passed many years in England, and were now settled in their native city of Bayonne.

I had not, however, come to Spain on a fruitless errand. At Bayonne, I, for the first time, saw Napoleon Buonaparte! I again spoke to Charles, and Ferdinand,

the King and Prince of Spain, (and they were prisoners!) I repaired to New Castile. I reviewed my own regiment D'Almeida ; and I served in it as Major, by my second name of Hernandez, having first consigned the command (by my sovereign's former permission) to my old friend, Gaspar Costello. We fought in the streets of Madrid : we shared, with your Wellesley, the honours won at Vimiera : and we bled at Corunna !

Don Zulvago in continuation.

Having slowly recovered from the effects of a wound received in the last battle, in which you lost your gallant Moore, I repaired to Madrid, where business of a public nature called me ; and this concluded, I resolved to indulge my feelings by one more visit to Aranjuez, after an absence of seventeen years. I called at the Palace, spoke to the old porters and gardeners, who, during the tumults of war, had remained at their posts, as stationary as the gates and trees

of which they had charge ; and, towards evening, at the precise hour when I was in the habit of visiting the cottage of Engelhardt, I slowly and dejectedly went towards it.

Every object I met with, and which I could identify as existing at the period I mention, awakened the fondest, the most bitter recollections. I now lingered, as formerly, by the banks of the river, my watch in my hand, fearful of intruding too early upon the retirement of the father and the daughter ; and I took pleasure in keeping the same track, in gathering a branch off the same tree, and in watching, as I had frequently done, the herds of deer, and flocks of birds, which still enlivened the woods on the opposite banks of the river.

At length I reached a thicket of orange trees, that formed a natural archway, and darting forward, I sought and found one particular tree, on which, with all the romantic fondness of youth, I had cut the name of "*Gabrielle*." It still existed : it was enlarged by time ; and, although defaced by moss and damp, that

proof of my early attachment was still to be seen. I leant against this tree, clasping it with my arms, and the lapse of time, at the moment, was forgotten : it seemed as if a few days only had passed since I had cut these letters ; and the days of my youth and love were at once restored to my mind, in the glowing colours of reality.

“ Oh, Gabrielle ! Gabrielle ! ” I cried, without considering that I might be overheard ; and, as my arm was still passed round the tree, and my face pressed against the trunk, I heard, near me, a murmur of voices. Ashamed of my weakness, I caught up my hat, which had fallen in my eagerness to reach this spot, and grasping my sword, I strode rapidly through the bushes, affecting to whistle as I walked along, and thus soon regained the public path.

I now saw before me two females, in black, the one tall, and of a commanding appearance, the other of a small and low stature, whose delicate and femi-

nine height was rendered still less observable by an habitual stoop. I was behind them. They seemed to walk hastily ; and, more than once, the taller female turned her head as if observing me. She then seemed to stoop and speak to the other, who leaned upon her arm ; but who, I remarked, never once turned round to watch me, as did, incessantly, her companion.

We were now within twenty yards of the well-remembered cottage of Engelhardt. I saw it through the trees ; and, before I approached farther, climbed a high bank, and there stood, taking mournful pleasure in examining the exterior ; and great was my surprise, on perceiving that there was no discernible change in either the house or its premises. The former bore exactly the same appearance it had worn seventeen years ago ; and here was still, and in the most perfect order, the geranium porch, leading to the vestibule, the flower garden, the little terrace, and the stone balustrade overhanging the river.

By my thus stopping to notice with attention these various objects of early endearment, and which filled my heart at once with tenderness and grief, the two females had distanced me; and although, from the height on which I stood, I could perceive them through the branches of the trees, they could not see me; the taller still looked frequently round, and concluding, as I imagined, that I had turned back, they immediately struck out of the path they had hitherto kept, and went hastily towards the cottage; the shorter entered it, whilst the other stood with her back to the door, as if securing the retreat of her friend.

I saw, I watched these precautions, and the truth flashed at once upon me! Impelled by boundless fury, (for, as the poet says, "Love, indeed, is a species of warfare,") I leaped from the spot whereon I had stood, rushed across the green-sward, and regardless of the sudden shriek of the tall female who stood sentinel, darted past her, and into the well-known parlour — there, pale and in tears, sat Gabrielle!

A few moments were spent by both of us in total silence : she had scarcely time to disengage herself from my arms, and to motion me to a seat at a distance, when the younger female entered the room, alarmed and terrified, at the vehemence of my conduct. I had thrown myself into the very identical large elbow chair, formerly belonging to the veteran Gustavus ; which when I comprehended, (and with a feeling of horror I sought in vain to conceal,) I started from it, and took the bench opposite, that I had so often occupied ; and thus situated, could almost imagine him seated before me :— my eyes were fixed on vacancy, and I seemed to be listening and speaking to a shadow.

From this state of delirium, I was recalled by a soft and well-known voice, which addressing the younger person, said in Spanish, “ Why are you so much alarmed, my love ? sit down, and compose yourself : — this gentleman was formerly a — ” She hesitated, — her lips could not pronounce the word *friend*, and she

quickly added, " he was many years since acquainted with your grandfather, as I before told you, when we saw him in the orange wood, though I did not mention his name. It has for some years been my wish to avoid this meeting; but since it *has* taken place, be assured, my child, you have no cause for terror."

" But why does he not speak?" said the daughter, in the same language, folding her arm round the waist of Mrs. Shelburne, as if *the latter* had need of protection, and not herself. " Why does he look so horribly pale? and why does he mutter as he looks at us? Oh, my dear mother, leave the room, leave it, I conjure you, he is mad, I am certain he is mad! — or, is he ill?"

" I am neither," I replied, recovering myself; then fixing my eyes on Donna Sobrino, I said in a tone of voice sufficiently expressive, " Gabrielle!"

The daughter at this threw a penetrating glance at me, and then hiding the face of her mother upon her own bosom, as if defending a helpless creature from the arm of power, or the threat

of insult, she exclaimed, “ ’Tis *he*, ’tis *he* himself! that man! that monster!”

“ Hush, hush, my child,” said Donna Sobrino, disengaging herself from the grasp of her daughter, and calmly looking towards me, whom she perceived thrown into a state little short of madness by these expressions,—“ I have again to request, Victorina, that you will compose yourself; be silent, be attentive, and listen to what may pass between the Conde d’Almeida and me; — it may prove a useful lesson to you, my love, and teach you to avoid the evils arising from over-credulity, to which the youthful female heart is most susceptible. I have already informed you of the progress and conclusion of my acquaintance with Don Isidore, the nobleman before you; indeed it was necessary, in order, as you approached maturity, to account to you for my frequent change of abode, and the secrecy with which it has hitherto been conducted; not to mention that it was my wish you should profit by my bitter experience. Attend to what may

now pass, and the lesson will be complete."

This calm and sensible reproof to her daughter, this judicious reference to the past, struck sorrow far deeper into my heart, than even tears or grief on her part could have done. She was now in her thirty-third year; her person had suffered, and the expression of the countenance had become that of settled dejection; yet the features were still lovely and perfect, the blue eyes still full of tenderness and innocence. But no tinge of colour now appeared in the cheek, nor smile upon the lip, nor animation whatever in her actions; all was slow, sad, and composed. Such was, however, still the delicacy of her shape, (although she had contracted a stoop in the shoulders, that took considerably from even her height,) and such the transparent whiteness of her skin, through which the blue veins were seen; that by the side of her daughter, who resembled her grandfather in stature, and her father in complexion and features, Gabrielle appeared to striking advantage: and had

I not understood they *were* mother and daughter, so much younger than her years did the former appear, and so considerably older the latter, that I should never have guessed their connection.

Taking pity, as I imagined, on what it was evident were my internal sufferings, Donna Sobrino whispered her daughter, who went to a sideboard, and brought out a salver of refreshments: this she placed on the little table before me. I took a glass of iced water, and was then able to speak, which, from powerful and suffocating emotion, I had hitherto been unable.

Recalling to recollection the period when, seventeen years back, it was Gabrielle herself who was accustomed, on my daily visit to the cottage, to perform these simple offices of hospitality, the change deeply wounded me; and I looked round the room to mark what alterations might have taken place in it, but I saw none. Here was still the chair of Gustavus; the old German clock; the bird-cage, in which was still

a bullfinch, though a young one; and even the identical spinning-wheel, standing in the same corner. To complete the scene, there lay on the small table a half knit stocking, the great atlas, which I had been accustomed to consult, and the earthen vases filled with flowers.

It was apparent to me, that in whose-soever hands this tenement had fallen on Gabrielle's marriage, and subsequent to that period, that she had, on recovering it into her own hands, restored its exterior and interior to the very identical appearance it wore during her father's life-time. Sentiment, thought I, must have had its share in this arrangement; for it was evident to my experienced eyes, that it had been done most scrupulously: there was nothing missing, neither any thing extraneous admitted. The daughter, indeed, was to me an eyesore, and gladly would I have exchanged her presence for that of her grandfather, the worthy old lieutenant, — the noble Engelhardt.

At last I spoke. " Gabrielle," I said,

“ if you will at length permit me to explain myself, you will find by what a series of untoward accidents we were separated.”

“ In the first place,” she said, “ permit me, Don Isidore, to interrupt you, by reminding you that my name is Sobrino, or Shelburne, immaterial to me by which I am addressed; but, to my regret, no one on earth at this day exists, not even Desmond, my faithful servant, who is entitled to call me by the endearing and familiar name of Gabrielle.”

I felt the rebuke; and my eyes, hitherto averted from her daughter, were now recalled, most painfully, to a tall and full formed female of severe and commanding aspect, sixteen years of age. I sighed, and turned with pleasure to the contemplation of a far more lovely object, though that object was her mother. Although I changed my mode of address to “ Donna Sobrino,” I could not my looks or my voice: and commencing at our early acquaintance, when I first called upon Lieutenant Engelhardt, as an old companion in arms of my father, (un-

conscious at that time that he had so invaluable a treasure as was Gabrielle,) I recapitulated the errors and disadvantages of my education, my friendless youth, my utter separation from female society, and the warp my mind had early received from pernicious and romantic books.

This explanation seemed to cause in Gabrielle at once the most powerful surprise, and the most profound emotion, as was evident, when with extreme difficulty she articulated these few words: "Then I was *not* deceived by my own presumptuous credulity, Don Isidore; you *were* at one time attached?"

"At *one* time! ever, ever. From the first day we met, here in this very room, to this present hour, I have never ceased to love one and the same object — yourself. You and your father," I continued, rising in the heat of argument; "you it was who destroyed our mutual happiness by your own precipitancy."

"Do not blame my father," she said, and the tears sprung to her eyes; but she would not suffer them to fall. "Spare

my poor father's memory ; at least do justice there, and acknowledge that he acted in all things, in a manner that could promote our happiness, as far as was consistent with a man of honour. — Your present candid explanation, Conde Almeida, exacts one on my part ; and since I now find you were no deliberate seducer of the affections, (as, until now, I ever considered you,) but the unhappy dupe of your own false principles, which led you to exercise deceit where most dangerous, I will be equally candid with you. My father, you ought to own, conducted himself towards you as a poor and obscure, though noble and gallant man, was alone authorised to do towards a nobleman of the greatest present and future advantages. I simply ask this question, was it for him to offer me to you, or for you to ask me of him ? The first is not to be mentioned, and the latter you did not attempt. He fulfilled his duty by us both ; had you demanded, he would have granted ; but he, like myself, would have suffered death, rather than transgress the bounds of delicacy

and honour." She paused, and perceiving I was disinclined or rather incapable of speaking, she continued: — "Your superiority in wealth and station were to him nothing, to me, less than nothing: and now that we are eternally separated — Nay, Senor, do not interrupt me, or force me to leave you, before I endeavour to clear up my past conduct; which, without such explanation, may seem the mere consequence of disappointment and mortification, perhaps of revenge. Let me confess, that had you not been the rich and powerful grandee, Zulvago Hernandez Isidore d'Almeida, but, with birth and connections respectable, only the humble Carlos — in the ranks, with a private's pay, you would have been his choice and mine."

My impatience here surmounting all restraint, I was relapsing into passion and reproaches, when Victorina, with a commanding look and voice, that, young as she was, at once checked me, entreated that I would spare her mother's feelings, adding, that if I could not controul mine, it were better to take my

leave, and defer the conversation until the next day.

Donna Sobrino here interrupted her, saying, "No, my dear, any farther communication after *this* day with Don Isidore, I design should be unnecessary; we have now met accidentally, and we meet no more. But I must return," she continued calmly, "to the endeavour of clearing my father's memory from blame. My poor father read *my* heart, but was not equally successful in reading *your's*, Senor. Had you been younger, he might have succeeded in this attempt; but at the age of twenty-six, man learns to restrain his feelings, and prevent their exposure to even an interested observer:—as I before remarked, he knew every emotion, every presumptuous hope of my breast; and often when you have quitted us, has said, whilst I hid my confusion on his shoulder, (I had no mother; he was my all,) 'Do not, do not, my child, I implore you, thus persist in indulging a partiality for this young man, until it can be ascertained that there is any on his part. Were he our equal,

as I wish for your sake and my own were the case, some chance might arise of his becoming my son-in-law; at present, I see none, and, as we may observe, he is too honourable to give hopes, which he has no intention of realising. Let me, therefore, Gabrielle, let me, on some proper pretext, forbid him the house, or do you consent to return with me to Saxony, or to England, if you prefer that country.' The idea of removal was to me torture, — it was worse than death. No, no, I cried." Here again pausing, she turned to Victorina, saying, "be this a warning to you, my love; had I suffered myself to be implicitly governed by my father, these evils might have been averted; but with tender, yet fatal indulgence, he complied, when I intreated him, as he valued my future peace, not to prevent my seeing Car—" she stopped; — "the name of Carlos is still too familiar in my memory." And with slight confusion she looked from me, and upon the ground. "You might plead," she continued, "that you were kept in doubt as to my feelings towards yourself; for many months, I agree

you were, but—" and she pointed expressively to the garden vestibule, "the short scene, as innocent as it was tender, that took place in that spot, must have completely opened your eyes as to the state of my affections, as my eyes then were to that of your's. With my father I had no secrets, and on my owning this circumstance, and the words that passed between us, he formed his own conclusions: it was, therefore, with but little comparative uneasiness that we, on the same day, came to the agreement with Don Sobrino, from whose importunity we could not otherwise be released: I thought we hazarded little, but my fate at that moment was sealed.

"You, Don Isidore, came the next day. You may remember the subject of your conversation with my father: you saw *him* no more. The following morning you renewed your visit, and as, from the agitation he had suffered during the night, chiefly on my account, my father had not risen, you enquired for me: he was asleep; but as we had spoken of your conduct shortly before you came, he said,

‘Should the Conde come, see him, Gabrielle; perhaps he will be less reserved with you, when alone, than with me; perhaps a private interview with yourself is what he wishes.’ And whilst speaking, never had I seen my father more pleased or happy from the hopes he had formed, that all would end as we could wish. ‘But remember,’ he added, solemnly, ‘remember our mutual and sacred promise to Don Sobrino; he has not hitherto been deceived; he knows the truth; and if at the expiration of the limited time he should claim you, Gabrielle, you become his wife.’ My father slept — you came — I received you — you know the rest:” and she pointed to the floor where she had fallen in a deadly swoon at my feet.

I here interrupted her, saying, “And is this all the information you can give me of the past: this I knew before. I knew I was beloved, I knew I loved you, as my own soul I loved you: but you have not yet explained wherefore you concealed yourself from my search thus long. Why, let me ask, have you rejected every offer

I have made you? why have you deprived me of the opportunity of justifying myself? — You are aware of the measures I have taken to find you ever since your widowhood ; for from the time of your marriage, until that period, I shunned *you*, as carefully as you have since shunned *me*. All reserve must now be laid aside ; all mystery and false delicacy thrown by ; wherefore here, at this hour, in the presence of your daughter, I offer you my hand ; my heart had been only your's from the first days of our acquaintance : unite, then, I implore you, your fate with mine ; let me as your husband, be the protector of yourself and child."

She looked at me with steady and sedate composure, her manner denoting pity, and perhaps esteem, but no sentiment of a more tender nature.

"The time is past," she said ; "had you, when my father filled that chair, and we thus situated, held out that hand to me, as now, I should not have been the wretch I have been ! my father might be still living !" Her features be-

came convulsed — some horrible recollection seemed to come across her mind, when Victorina rose hastily to her assistance. For a few minutes the latter quitted the room, to fetch some powerful essence for the purpose, when Gabrielle continued, (and leaning forward towards me,) in a low and hurried voice, which had something in it awful and terrific — “ We must spare the memory of that child’s deceased parent ; she herself does not know it ; but — but now learn — that my father, in defending me from — my husband did not intend it — the blow *was* accidental, but it was mortal : my poor father lingered long and kept the secret, even on his death-bed he kept it. He died in my arms. Spared, I thank God, the sight of that dreadful hour, when, plunged into the depths of poverty, the very beds we slept upon were seized by the merciless creditors ; and Sobrino himself — a pistol-shot awoke me at midnight, and on the truss of straw beside me, lay the bleeding body of a suicide husband ! Oh ! Carlos, Carlos, had you been mine, you would have sheltered my

aged father from penury ; you would not have insulted, have ridiculed the infirmities of the crippled soldier : with *you* we might have been blessed — but for *you*, I might not have hurried myself into a marriage with that man. Thus, though it was in fact the hand of Sobrino that gave him the blow, *you* were virtually the murderer of my father.”

She concealed her face ; Victorina returned, and with proper assistance her mother was restored to calmness. As I thought it necessary, for Gabrielle’s sake and my own, that the interview should here terminate, I rose ; observing, as if no possible objection could exist, “ You will see me to-morrow : ” and was leaving the room, when she detained me, saying calmly, though impressively — “ Let us, Don Isidore, perfectly understand each other : we have come to a mutual explanation ; and I hope now you fully comprehend that this is our last interview. You may remember the incident of the porcelain vase ; be assured that my father’s spirit, though

softened into feminine feeling, survives in me, and I hope will extend to my daughter. This meeting, I most solemnly protest in the presence of that daughter, now of mature age and understanding, to be our last. I from this day will neither see, speak, nor write to you, or receive any messages from agents or otherwise: poverty and I are now old friends, and we need not separate for the remainder of our lives; at least *you*, Conde, shall never be the means of banishing her from me. And I now repeat my charge to my daughter, on my blessing never to hold any communication whatsoever with you, or to receive aid or support in any shape whatever, from you or your's." After another pause she added, — "Neither my father nor myself wished otherwise than good to you; and with his last breath he blessed you, that peace of mind and happiness might be your's. You have also now my forgiveness, my kindest wishes; and on my death-bed you shall be blessed of me." — She held out her hand, saying, "Farewell," and the name of Carlos

trembled on her lips : the presence of the daughter restrained me ; and without even touching the hand she extended, I added, as I hastily made towards the door, “ This night I pass on the ground under the windows yonder, and to-morrow, after sun-rise, shall enter here, and see you.”

“ Then to-morrow,” she said, “ myself and daughter will seek the protection of a convent.” I stopped, and looked at her steadily, “ Yes,” she added, “ since this is your decree, Senor, be it so ; I did hope to pass the remnant of my life in this humble, yet most beloved abode ; but even from this asylum, after a two years’ residence, you drive me in the very spirit of persecution. No place, I am now convinced, can save me from your intrusion, but the holy walls of a monastery ; there alone, or in the grave, I can be assured of protection.”

She wept : I would have given worlds at that moment, that Victorina had retired ; whilst *she* remained in the room, I could only regard Gabrielle in the sacred light of a mother, and reverence was the predominant feeling ; add to which, as if

the united spirits of Engelhardt and Sobrino inspired the girl, her looks alone awed me, and when she spoke, I trembled. The mother was all softness and sensibility; the daughter, a compound of stern dignity and dispassionate wariness.

My heart was full; I cast one look upon the weeping Gabrielle, and without noticing Victorina, took up my hat and sword, and quitted the house.

The next day I wrote a full and impartial account of all the above particulars of my early life, and concluded with imploring Donna Sobrino to accept my hand; or, if that was utterly rejected, to suffer me to adopt her daughter as my own child, and future heiress; by this plan, herself would be entitled to share my present fortune: on which latter conditions being agreed to, I solemnly engaged never to attempt to see her, except upon her own invitation. This letter I sent by one of the gardeners of the palace, whom I desired merely to deliver it at the door of Donna Sobrino's dwell-

ing, trusting to herself to send an answer at her own leisure and pleasure.

Three days passed, and no answer was returned, during which period I even refrained from going towards the cottage, fearful of intruding on their solitude, or preventing them leaving the house, apprehensive of meeting with me in their walks. The delay, however, caused me no disquietude, or rather I construed her silence favourably, as taking time for deliberation on my proposals; but on the fourth morning, my heart took the alarm, and I hastened towards their dwelling.

It was forsaken! my own letter was put into my hand by the man in whose charge the premises had been left, and by whom I was informed, that four days back the ladies had quitted the house and Aranjuez, for Corunna.

My travels, my friends, may well be called the travels of the heart. I went to Corunna, and felt a death-blow to all my hopes, on understanding that she had placed herself and daughter under British protection, that of the English General

Sir D—— B——, and was then with the remains of the army of the unfortunate Sir John Moore, (the brave, though discomfited English troops,) on her way to England.

Had I heard that she had executed her threat of throwing herself into a convent, I could not have been more afflicted: for though, as a Spanish patriot, I might have followed her to Great Britain, yet this last step of her's appeared to me so decisive of inflexible abhorrence, that I felt inclined, having done all in my power to remove her prejudices, and make amends for the past, to give up the pursuit, and only endeavour by letter to persuade her to accept the means of passing the remainder of her days in comfort, if not in affluence.

I had her picture — that which I obtained from the artist who had been employed by Sobrino, on his marriage, to execute a miniature of her. The painter finished two, and gave me my choice; and from that hour to this, I have worn it next the heart in which she still reigns.

Shortly after, I returned to Aranjuez ; and took a sort of desperate satisfaction in visiting the forsaken cottage, wherein, as you, Sir Eliot, and Mr. Clonmore, have been lovers, (though more successful, because more deserving than myself,) you may suppose, and you are right, that I spent a considerable part of my time. I purchased that and the few adjoining premises ; and dearer and more precious to me was this humble property, of which I was now owner, than all my palaces in Madrid and elsewhere, with their territories annexed.

I lived in the little parlour. This, with mingled sorrow and pleasure, I perceived was despoiled of many of its chief ornaments ; which best served to identify it in my eyes. The spinning-wheel, the clock, the arm-chair, all which articles were so constructed that they could take to pieces, were removed ; — the bird-cage, and the coarse Segovian flower vases, had also disappeared. I missed them, it is true ; but, unless they were regarded by Gabrielle with peculiar interest, as having reference to the past

—to the days of her early youth—to the hours of innocence and love, (and unless innocent and lawful, love is *not* love,) she would never, I thought, have encumbered herself, and in a long voyage, with things of no intrinsic value, and in that idea there was consolation.

Love, and war, seem to have held me in perpetual thralldom. No sooner did I seek repose from the one, than the other asserted its claim to my duties; and I was sought, in my retreat, by a few of the members of the Cortes. My invaded country called on my assistance, and I once more fought and bled in her defence. Conjointly with your Graham, we won the battle at Barrosa; and at Albuera, I was at the side of Beresford, the conqueror of Soult.

A few days after, about the 20th of May, seeking a short respite from the fatigues of an endless campaign, I quitted my regiment, and, having had

my wounds dressed by a surgeon on whom I could depend, at Aranjuez, went towards my retreat, in order to recover some papers, of political consequence, which I had left there. The place was a blank — the cottage no longer existed : a party of French troops had been billeted on the occupier in my absence, when a dispute had risen, which had ended in the destruction of the dwelling. It had shared the fate of war, — fire had consumed it ; and be assured, my friends, I could have more readily seen my palace at Madrid, and my castles destroyed, than this humble dwelling, the solace of affection.

But these were not times to indulge in private and selfish regret. After a short stay at Aranjuez, I again joined my regiment ; and though pressed by Costello to take the command upon myself, and resign to him the majority, I refused, and continued, as Hernandez, to serve under this brave and noble veteran.

It was at this period that a secret meeting of the friends of Charles, our

imprisoned king, took place at Toledo. I was of the number ; and, commissioned by the rest, quitted the Peninsula, on a secret expedition to South America. You may remember, I paid you a flying visit at the time ; and in the September following, about the period when the comet was first observed, I again landed at Teneriffe, and went to Ben Lomond, where the image of Gabrielle was once more brought full before me, in the person of the lovely Lady Alford, then with the Balfours. I had no design that my stay should be long here, and was preparing to return to Spain, having fulfilled my instructions, when Balfour detained me, and prevailed on me to join in an excursion of pleasure to Madeira. There every agonizing pang of my heart was revived, on beholding, in the humble dependant of Sir William and Lady L—— Victorina, the daughter of my cherished Gabrielle !

In vain I entreated her to acquaint me where was her mother at that time. She would not even acknowledge that she was still in England. In vain I implored

this young girl not to risk trusting herself to the mercy of strangers, far from home, and without a friend to protect, or see that justice were done her. She was inflexible. I blamed her quitting her mother ; but, with cutting asperity, she replied, “ The poor have no choice.—I had acquired, at the expense of all I was worth in the world, the advantages of music ; and, before this offer was made me, had begun my itinerary career. I went from house to house, giving instructions in this science, and thereby contrived to gain a scanty subsistence, at the best precarious, and ever at the risk of health, being daily exposed to all weathers. But storms were sunshine, compared to what I endured from the insolence of some of my employers :—the indignity of treatment, and, finally, the abhorrence with which I regarded the line I had adopted, soon forced me to relinquish it. Here I am under safe protection for seven years, during which time half of my salary (which is most liberal, in consideration of my going abroad) can support my mother in com-

parative comfort; whereas, had I remained in England, my earnings would scarcely have supplied the exigencies of the day, as we, from bitter experience, well know."

And this, Sir Eliot, was spoken to me, —to me, the master of upwards of two millions. Money, we thus are convinced, is *not* all-powerful; for though I used every argument I was master of, to prevail on this dear girl to give up her India scheme, and return to England to her mother, whom she might yet prevail upon to accept a competence from me, she peremptorily refused. She even objected to another proposal I made, and with which (depending on the hospitality I had ever met with at Euphorbia) I eagerly urged her to comply; — this was to go to Teneriffe with Lady Alford, whom, I felt assured, would, with Mrs. Grantley, join in protecting her. I had another motive. My hope was, had she consented to my desire, to have obtained, through your medium, a reconciliation with the mother; — would but Lady Alford, I thought, stand my friend on

this occasion, and, at her return to England, take charge of Victorina, and bring about a meeting between myself and Gabrielle, a union might yet take place. But Victorina was inflexible. Her mother had bound her by a solemn promise to avoid me, in whatsoever part of the world we might meet, (and, from my constantly roaming through various countries, she thought it probable,) and neither to accept any pecuniary favour, nor hold any correspondence or communication, by letter or otherwise, with me or my friends; and, above all, still to conceal her own residence. I called Victorina my child, — my adopted daughter,—my heiress. All was in vain. She adhered strictly to the promise given to her mother; and, as you know, sailed with Lady L—— to India.

You may remember, Sir Eliot, that I related to you, on my return to Teneriffe, the heads of what I have here detailed; and that, but for you, I should have proceeded in a few days for England,

when you prevented my departure, and offered the services of Mr. Clonmore to find out the actual residence of Donna Sobrino, or Mrs. Shelburne, as in that country she was called; and, when found, his interest with her in my behalf.

Your friend was unsuccessful; and I then resolved to follow Victorina to India, and endeavour to prevail on Lady L—— to give me the necessary clue; when, as I mentioned in the beginning of this letter, or rather narrative, a Spanish passenger, on board the ship in which I had taken my passage, not only satisfied me that Mrs. Shelburne was still in England, but informed me of the place of her abode; and, as I also mentioned, I removed to a homeward-bound British vessel which we met, with design to proceed to England, whereas I am now a prisoner in a French ship, on her way to Rochefort.

An English sail is in view! The ship in which I am detained is cleared for

action ! I can write no more. I know not when, or by what conveyance, this can ever reach you ; but, whether liberty or a prison is my fate, be convinced, my friends, that, until death, I shall ever remain,

Your most faithful and attached

The Conde D'ALMEIDA.

I request to be remembered kindly to all at Euphorbia — to the Balfours, and to your worthy physician, Dr. H——.

LETTER XLII.

The Rev. Henry Clonmore to Sir Eliot Howard.

Bloomfield Rectory.

I LOSE no time, my dear Howard, in acquainting you of the safe arrival, at Falmouth, of the Countess of Alford, and Captain Cavendish. They were really so much engrossed in this, their fifth honey-moon, by their own charming selves, that they could neither give us any very minute tidings of their friends left behind at the Fortunate Islands, nor consent to our invitation of spending their autumn at Bloomfield. I therefore had the honour of attending them to, and leaving them at Bath, where they design to winter.

In my life I never saw a couple better matched in the matrimonial yoke! They seem born for each other; and I now most sincerely rejoice, that by the advice

of Dr. H——, we advised the Captain to try his fate in a voyage to Teneriffe. The cruize was desperate service, I allow; but he has been successful, and won one of the fairest prizes our island can boast of. Lady Alford is still most enchanting; and had we not been informed of her illness, never should have guessed it from her appearance. She is certainly thinner than she was, and a little sun-burnt; but the former is no disadvantage, and the latter gives greater richness to her complexion.

With Louisa, your sister's predilection for Zulvago finds no excuse; with me, the most unlimited. In personal and mental accomplishments, very few men are his equal; and even the eccentricities of his character were partly the means of attaching her. His very indifference to herself, merely as herself, piqued her pride, and inspired her with the wish of gaining his affections. We may, however, now rejoice, that her partiality has been so early and decisively put a stop to,

or it might have led to unpleasant consequences, particularly as we are now aware, from the narrative he has sent us, (the perusal of which, I, and Louisa, have just finished,) of what were his youthful sentiments respecting the female sex ; and that his own vehement passion for this Saxon lady has ever been, and will be the predominant sentiment of existence. It strikes me, though I may be wrong, that it will yet end in his ruin. Dr. H—— has read this narrative, and with attention ; or rather, Louisa and I have read it to him, for the worthy veteran's sight begins to fail him, and his remark was, “ Ah ! that hidalgo, and his couple of million, is little better than a state courier, after all ; only that the latter is the wiser of the two, for he travels to some purpose ; whereas the other is spending his life in dancing after a will-o'-the-wisp. The vengeance take the woman, with her Spanish pride ; why not kiss and be friends — forget and forgive. And as for that brown, Roman-nosed, sulky young jade who is gone to India, a bundle of pompous obstinacy, I don't

like *her*. She made her mother flout our honest Don famously ; but will try to entrap a nabob for herself, with her squalling, and her tinkling, and her twanging pianos and harps ; and then come home with her chariot-wheels to raise a dust, and fling about mud on us pedestrians, perhaps on Zulvago himself, as if to say, ‘ we are not beholden for our gold to you, Squire Carlos.’ ”

Both Louisa and I considered the remarks of the Doctor on Victorina as too severe, but he was peremptory on this head ; and though we reminded him that the daughter was rather to be honoured for her fidelity to the promise made to her mother, and for the spirit of independence she had chosen in keeping to her agreement with Lady L——, rather than accept Zulvago’s offers, he grew peevish and violent ; and finding at last that he had the worst of the argument, interrupted us both with “ Hold your tongues, she is an ill-bred puss, and I hope will find the wife-market at Calcutta overstocked.”

I have not been able to find the exact place of abode of this Gabrielle, this Mrs. Shelburne; but upon the intimation of her being at Kensington, I went thither, and made the most minute enquiries, and hitherto without effect.

I see by the public papers the account of the action between the English vessel, on board of which was *Zulvago*, and the French privateer: the former, it appears, took the latter after a desperate resistance, and carried her to the Isle of Bourbon, (which you may remember was ceded to us about two years back.) The report mentions that a Spanish officer was wounded in the action, whom I doubt not was *Zulvago*; he is, consequently, at present at the above Island, and no longer a prisoner; we may, therefore, expect to hear from him soon, perhaps from India; or he may return to *Teneriffe*; or we may hope to see him in England. He is welcome wherever he goes; and in the meantime I will prosecute my search for Mrs. Shelburne; and when found, shall make no ceremony of taking her by force to *Bloomfield Rectory*. Our Spanish friend

has been more than once a prisoner on her account, and I shall not scruple to confine her in my house for his sake. In the mean time, I have applied at the Bank of England, where her annuity is paid half-yearly; but it appears, they pay it to a person empowered to receive it by letter of attorney, who is more taciturn with respect to his employer's abode than could be orator Mum * himself. We must, therefore, have recourse to stratagem, not to injure, but to benefit the enemy.

With respect to my own family, all go on as happily as I can desire: my children continue daily to improve; and, thanks be to God, Louisa and I have little or nothing to wish for. St. Eloi is no longer with me; after a residence of ten years he had become dear to me as one of my own sons, but his parents have reclaimed him, and he will, no doubt, settle and marry in France. I hear from

* In O'Keeffe's "Son-in-Law."

him frequently by the way of Holland : of course politics are excluded our correspondence, and hitherto it has been uninterrupted. My children and he also write to each other, which is of the utmost mutual advantage with respect to language, he improving their French, and they his English.

Dudley, by Lady Alford's account, is a perfect Adonis, and Claudy the three Graces blended in one : we enquired farther particulars concerning them, but there she stopped us, saying, " Exterior is all I pretend to describe ; as to the interior of their charming curly heads, even my sailor R. N. Cavendish is a better judge than I am."

How grateful do Louisa and myself feel to you, my friend, and to Mrs. Grantley, for all the care and fondness shown to our dear boy. We, as you may suppose, feel most anxious to see him, but my wife is not exactly in sailing trim at this time ; and I, like a good husband,

must soon sit by the nest and cheer my thriving mate.

It gives me much pleasure to understand from you, that Turner continues to conduct himself with propriety. Little peculiarities of disposition must be overlooked, where we are convinced, as in his case, the principles are sound, and the understanding cultivated. He has one excellent recommendation, that of industry; for I never yet saw him idle: I have observed every hour of his employed in study or in amusement, but never yet found him, to use a common expression, *doing nothing*.

I am glad the foils suited, and have to add all that is grateful from your old master Angelo, who remembers his young pupil, Sir Eliot Howard, with much kindness. Your attention to him was, indeed, an "*Agreeable surprise*."

With respect to music, as forming part of the education of a young man, I am entirely of your opinion, and felt

most happy that Dudley had the good sense to own his conviction of your being in the right. As to your ideas on dancing, I know not what to say; for I, an old fellow within a few months of forty, actually danced country dances for upwards of two hours the other night, at a rustic ball given at our parsonage in honour of Lady Alford's wedding.

We danced with all our legs and *all our hearts*, as one of my little girls remarked. I footed it down, and footed it up, allemande and change sides, with the Miller's wife, to the tune of the "White Cockade;" whilst Louisa shuffled off the Miller himself to one of her daughters, and left me to flirt with all the pretty girls in my parish. No, Howard, I cannot consent to leave off dancing, notwithstanding even Lady Alford's prohibition, who has frequently called aloud to me, "Clonmore, if you dance, positively I will never hear you preach again, for a jigging parson is my abhorrence."

Dudley's letters to us, and to his bro-

thers and sisters *, begin now to display great cultivation of talent, flow of language, truth, and energy; and yet, at times, there are in them sudden breaks of boyish simplicity perfectly delightful: — and what to me is most pleasing, when speaking of his studies, he avoids technical terms; and the mention of superior attainments not to be expected at his age. His mother, as you may well imagine, collects all these letters most carefully, and regards them as one of her greatest treasures: they are numbered, folded lengthways, and tied up with blue ribbon; and are often produced either for private perusal, for the amusement of her other children, or to gratify some of our intimate friends who feel an interest in the welfare of our boy, among the latter, none more so than Dr. H——.

He was with us very lately, and, excepting periodical fits of the gout, is still strong, healthy, and cheerful, and as whimsical, as positive, and *polite* as ever.

* They do not appear.

His delight at Lady Alford's return glistened in his eyes, and whilst he claimed the bridal salute, he called her a beautiful, capricious hussy, for jilting him, after giving him her picture, which, as a token of love, and an earnest of herself, he said he had shown to half the world: the latter assertion is most true, for he does display his diamond snuff-box most furiously.

At the time of receiving Dudley's last letter, our old physician was here, and he would scarcely give us time to run it over before he whisked it out of our hands; he put on his spectacles in silence, and leaning back in his great chair, deliberately began reading it, with as little notice of either Louisa or me as if it had been a letter to himself, of which he had permitted us to take a slight glance.

We shortly after observed him lay it down, take off and wipe his spectacles, and give three or four surly hems; during which, he regaled himself with a

pinch or two of snuff. We readily guessed the passage that caused this interruption. A few lines at the bottom of the second page ran thus : —

“ And when you see my dear Dr. H——, whom I so well remember, tell him from me, that I bless the hour when he advised you to send me to Teneriffe ; for though I do love you, and mamma, and England, yet —— You cannot imagine, papa, how much I love Sir Eliot and Mrs. Grantley ; — and then, Claudy, Claudy, papa, is so very dear to me !”

The Doctor at last concluded the letter ; and when Louisa was all agitation to receive it from him, and I felt equally anxious, for he really had not allowed us to finish it, with the utmost indifference to our feelings of suspense, he began reading it, or rather poring over it, a second time, (as I have seen many a dozing provoking politician in a coffee-house over a newspaper.) I, at last, took compassion on Louisa, and remarked, “ You are not aware, Doctor, that a lady is longing for that letter ;” without, however, any idea of alluding to her most

honourable situation. When he replied, "Then let her *long*, and her next bairn may be what none of the rest are, a *lettered* man."

Louisa received the sally with good-humour, and saying, "You have now fairly killed my impatience," left the room. The Doctor watched the closing door, and then looking full at me over his spectacles, threw Dudley's letter across the table; remarking, after a sagacious wink, and his usual compression of the lip, — "Away with you, madam; no, no, your husband and I must *confab* over *this* by ourselves; — there, read it with attention. If that young villain of your's does not yet cause his Baronet guardian many a head-ache, and the daughter many a heart-ache, I'll eat all the sermons you ever composed. — Here we thought all was going on fair and smooth the other side the *green pond*; and yet, in less than two or three years, I pronounce there will be the devil to pay there."

You may conclude how great was my alarm at this intimation, and I pressed

him to explain himself; when in a gruff snarl he said, "Why, you ugly hound, have you eyes? can't you read? won't you understand?—Don't you see that that whelp of your's is as obstinate and self-willed as a Spanish mule, —that he will soon fly in the face of his guardian, and set up for an *Independent*? — Can't you read? have you ten grains of comprehension in your brain, sir."

It was in vain to remind the Doctor, that he had not, until now, suffered me to conclude Dudley's letter; I read it through, and with the utmost attention. The following is the passage which has awakened our old friend's fears concerning the future proceedings of our boy; and it certainly has caused me and Louisa, to whom I afterwards imparted it, no small share of uneasiness.

After filling five pages with an account of his studies and amusements, during which he contrives to hook in Claudy's name upwards of fifty times, he adds, — "And, papa, I wish I had a profession; for I well remember every word Captain Cavendish said on the subject of

a man having a profession. He asserted, that every man ought to have some ostensible employment, whether he possessed fortune or not ; that with respect to himself, however rich he might already be, or become in future, he would, though married, and to a rich Countess, pursue his calling, until disabled by illness, or by age ; and that it was the duty of every person to contribute their time, or labour, or talents, to the general good of society, and not to live a drone in a bee-hive. Now, papa, I am determined on also having a profession. Sir Eliot is a wealthy and a good man, and though he does not actually follow any calling in particular, he is always employed ; but though I hope to resemble him in goodness, I never expect to be rich, unless I can earn riches. I am conscious that I am only one of ten children, and that you are only a country clergyman ; though you are better off than

“ Passing rich with forty pounds a-year.”

“ You are in the church. My brothers are, it seems, all already engaged in, or destined for some employment ;

and why should not I? I wish, by the next ship that leaves England, you will inform me what you wish me to embrace, and I will obey you in all things most faithfully. — I have already frequently spoken to my dear Sir Eliot on this, to me very important, subject; but, I am sorry to say, though he is so very communicative on every other, he gives me no answer which perfectly satisfies me on this. When I consult Mrs. Grantley, the general reply is, ‘My brother is a better judge of those affairs than I can be, you had better speak to him;’ and when I ask Claudy what I shall be, she answers, ‘Be a gentleman, Dudley; that is all I desire.’ Now, in this, papa, as you must be aware, Claudy is very silly; for, though a soldier, a sailor, a parson, a lawyer, a merchant, a physician, or an ambassador, I should still be a gentleman. I should like to be in parliament. In the mean time, I intend to be a carpenter.”

At this sentence I threw the letter upon the table, saying, “The boy’s a fool.”

“ Not he,” said Doctor H—— ;
“ more folly in your remark than in his
argument. Read on.”

I did read on ; but the conclusion of
the letter merely contained a list of such
articles as he said he stood in need of ;
and no agent on earth, I fancy, ever re-
ceived a commission of a more heteroge-
neous nature. I am to send him a tool-
chest, completely filled with the best
productions of Sheffield, Birmingham,
and Salisbury ; some pieces of red tape,
some court sticking-plaister, Welsh flannel,
bell wire, flints and steels, Flanders lace,
gunpowder, garden seeds, the busts of
Fox and Pitt, Wellington and Bonaparte,
artificial flowers of English manufacture,
black ribbon, tortoise-shell combs, and a
barrel of two-inch nails. In short, I did
not conclude the list ; but gave it, the
next day, to Louisa, who very gravely
took a memorandum in her pocket-book,
and entreated me to remind her, lest
she should forget a single article.

And now, my dear Howard, in what
light do you see this business, thus

started by our boy, who, entering upon his fourteenth year, must be allowed a voice. I have no wish but your's. Louisa is wholly neuter in the affair; whilst Dr. H—— has at once espoused the cause of Dudley, by approving of his intention, at the same time adding, that suffering him to have his own way, can in no wise militate against whatever views you may in future form in his favour. — “The boy is in the right,” said the Doctor; “unless a man is a peer of the realm, or born to a seat in the Commons, (a sly political hit this of our old friend,) he *ought* to follow some useful calling. If in parliament, upper or lower house, that will furnish sufficient employment for tongue, brain, and heart, without any other. Otherwise, every man ought to aim at becoming a useful and active member of society. There was myself, for example: — My father left me ten thousand pounds, on the interest of which I could have very well managed to sleep, eat, drink, talk, ride, and walk; but, would my country have benefited by my complaisance? No, sir: I went to

Glasgow, I studied medicine, I attended lectures, I returned to London, I practised, and my name will go down to posterity with those of my countrymen Halford and Bailley, Willis and Farquhar; whilst my nieces and nephews, and there are a clan of them, will reap the benefit of my ten thousand, now increased four-fold. Did *I* not chuse the better part?"

"True, Doctor; but Dudley is as yet very young."

"Young!" he replied; "limiting man's youth to thirty, he has nearly reached half way. Let him step over his fourteenth birth-day, and you will find him on new ground, the sturdy puppy."

"Well, my dear sir, all that we can now do is to submit unreservedly to Sir Eliot's decision; whatever he judges, must be right."

"Then I," said Doctor H——, "will influence the judge; for, by the vengeance, I will write to him this very day; and whatever predilection your boy may have taken for any particular course of study, shall be followed up. The Bible is already his breast-plate; and he must

now get acquainted with the world, and leave his snug coop at Euphorbia, to visit our English farm-yard, and learn to distinguish good from evil. I agree with that confounded Captain Larboard and Starboard, who has stolen my princess from me, that every man of sense and principle should, for the benefit of society, if not for his own individual happiness, follow some profession; and, in spite of romantic baronets, (tossing away his hand, with a snapping finger,) and reverend waltzing fops, (a nod at me, though I never waltzed in my life,) the lad *shall* follow his own inclinations."

Thought I, as I rose from the table to avoid farther argument, for I found he was working himself into a rage, "You have pretty well followed your inclinations respecting us all! But for your recommendation of me to the late Lady Howard, I, and my wife, should not be now owners of Bloomfield Rectory. But for you, neither Sir Eliot, Mrs. Grantley, Turner, Claudy, nor Dudley, would be living at Teneriffe, or Lady Alford ever, perhaps, have become the

happy wife of Cavendish.” — I slightly remarked all this, adding, that Zulvago alone had escaped the magic of his influence. On which he protested, with a furious rap on the table, that he yet intended to stand father to that impudent widow Gabrielle, and give her to a man, who was a thousand times too good for her.

As he then launched into violent invective against all coquettes, whether single or widowed, I was forced to observe, that I was sorry to see it was his old silver snuff-box he was then using, as, had his grand one been in commission, we might hope for peace. And it is really incredible the whimsical effect these snuff-boxes have on the temper of our friend! With his common one in hand, he continues his argument, whilst rapping, opening, shutting, and clapping it violently down on the table in the heat of debate, until his opponent fairly owns himself defeated. Whereas his diamond box operates like a talisman : he handles it with caution, shakes it gently, places it before him for universal

admiration, looks and smiles at the beauty on the lid, which smiles at him, examines each separate feature, and by degrees becomes placid and composed.

Lady Alford was highly amused on remarking the effect it had on him, and threatened to make Cavendish a present of a similar snuff-box, as a check, when, in company, he should begin to show off his quarter-deck airs.

As to politics, I, at your own request, make no mention of them. Public events are, in their consequences, like squibs;—some fall in the water, and are suddenly extinguished; others alight on the ground, the nature of which renders them harmless; whilst a third sort drop among combustibles, when ignition takes place, and, Heaven knows when, how, or where the flame may stop! The affairs of Russia now occupy all our attention. St. Eloi writes me word, that there is a report General Moreau was killed at Dresden, where the allies were defeated. But by the time you can receive this let-

ter, these affairs will be all old news with us.

I send you the new publications you desire. You will perceive, that, in the poetic world, Byron, and Scott, Southey, and Moore, share the evergreen. Lady Alford, who, of late, is become a great admirer of poetry, (her husband's taste,) says, that had she the crowning of the four, a wreath of cypress would be the *Corsair's* claim; the laurel that of *Marmion*; the plain and noble bay should deck the brow of *Madoc*; and the rich and blossoming myrtle be entwined in the locks of the *Perii*.

Ever your sincere friend,
HENRY CLONMORE.

Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell (or, Irish beau Charley, as Lady Alford calls him,) and his wife, at present on a visit in the neighbourhood, dined with us the other day, when *he* desired to be, in the most friendly manner, remembered to you and your's.

LETTER XLIII.

Sir Eliot Howard to the Rev. Henry Clonmore:

Euphorbia, Teneriffe.

THE continued silence of Don Zulyago, my friend, rather alarms me; particularly as I cannot find any mention in the public papers of the fate of the ship in which he sailed, as I understand, from the Isle of Bourbon for India. I have written to a person at the Cape of Good Hope, with whom I have had money transactions, and requested him to make the necessary enquiries. It seems equally unfortunate, that you cannot trace the retreat of Mrs. Shelburne. Should you find her, I have to request you will endeavour to prevail on her to come to Teneriffe, where, under mine and Mrs. Grantley's protection, she will be safe until the return of Zulyago, when, I have no doubt, all will

come at last to a happy arrangement between them. To his plan of her seeking an asylum with Lady Alford, you will, of course, see the bar. We are conscious of what has passed, of which Zulvago is ignorant; and I trust he will ever remain thus.

I have received your last letter, accompanied by one on the same subject from Doctor H——, neither of which gave me the smallest surprise, habituated as I have long and daily been, to the hearing of Dudley's arguments on the necessity of his following a profession. The words of Cavendish sunk deep in his mind, as I observed at the time; and they will never be obliterated. Dudley is ardent, impetuous, and insatiable after knowledge; and, in person, has now outgrown your memory. Strictly adhering to his present system of regularity and temperance, he will, no doubt, not only enjoy good health, but longevity. In stature, he is nearly as tall as myself; and, with all the graces of youth, joins a

steadiness and firmness of carriage, seldom seen at that age. By constantly mixing in society, yet, as I have before remarked, without exactly forming part of the company, he has acquired a sort of modest assurance, a kind of diffidence, which is as pleasing as it is becoming.

He rides well ; and, what is of still more importance, walks well. Fencing, and the military exercise, have given him a firm and commanding air, which Claudy calls “ very noble ;” and have greatly assisted towards the expansion of his limbs, and the freedom of his action. He dances as well as a *gentleman* ought to dance ; and, in swimming, he might surpass a native of the Friendly Islands.

His progress in languages has been most rapid — in mathematics, tolerable ; and, in the first rudiments of chemistry, he gained some knowledge from Balfour, when on a visit to Ben Lomond. These he attempts to teach Mr. Turner, with whom he continues to keep on the most amicable footing. They are now engaged in constructing a balloon ; and amusing themselves in other lesser philosophical

experiments, preparatory to their intended expedition to the summit of the Peak, to which, with a Guanche, and Pedro, Miguel, and Romeri, for their guides and attendants, they are to accompany Mr. Balfour.

But to return to the subject which now occupies my heart and attention, to almost the exclusion of all others, — this new determination of Dudley of embracing a profession. The other day, on going into my study, I found him and Claudy standing in the middle of the floor, seemingly in high debate; yet, both separately engaged. She was playing with an old-fashioned bandalour, and he, chucking an apple from one hand to the other. My entrance into the room, as usual, was unnoticed; and I went over to my desk, and began writing.

“ Indeed,” said Claudy, “ I cannot understand what it is you *do* want;” and she continued her play.

“ I want some employment,” said Dudley, still tossing his apple to and fro

in the air. "In short, I repeat, I do not wish, when grown up, to be an idler, a loungeur, a selfish nobody."

"Employment! Really, Dudley, you are a most unreasonable boy, — you that are employed from morning till night! In the course of one day only, I have known you to read, compose, translate, write, draw, dance, fence, run, swim, and ride! Not to mention hoops, balls, and battle-dores, with me. You are never satisfied!"

"Either you do not, or you will not understand me, Claudy," said your son, now eating his apple, sitting astride upon a camp-stool, and watching her dexterous play with the toy, his eyes following its motion. "Have I not explained to you, that all my present studies end in *self-gratification*; that they tend to no decisive point, no general intention to benefit mankind? That my mental acquirements improve *my* mind alone; that my bodily exercises strengthen *my* limbs alone. And what service to the world is either my body or my mind, unless exercised for the universal good?"

“ I wish, Dudley, you would speak in plainer language. In *three* simple words, tell me what is your wish ?”

“ You shall hear it in *two*,” replied Dudley, with firmness ; “ a profession.”

“ But boys of fourteen do not follow professions, ’

“ No ; but boys of fourteen,” he replied, drawing up his head, “ begin to prepare themselves to follow them, when they shall arrive at a proper age. I have read biography to some purpose ; and can inform you that many men, at seventeen and eighteen, have already made great progress in life ; but how is that possible, unless they begin at fourteen ? And how shall I be able, unless I now fix on some pursuit, without which, when I become a man, I shall be nothing.”

“ I repeat,” said my girl, “ you will still be a gentleman.”

“ And I repeat,” answered Dudley, with rising warmth, “ that you are very foolish, Claudy. Have I not already told you, that the word *gentleman* is a general term, applicable to every person, of suitable education, polished manners,

and moral conduct; and that it is my wish, to add to that of *gentleman*, one by which I may be individually distinguished. Now, my dear Claudy, do put away that trumpery bandalour," (she instantly complied,) "and tell me," he continued, taking both her hands in his, and kissing her cheek, "what would *you* wish me to be?"

"You have already had my answer, twenty times, Dudley—a fine country gentleman, like papa; and that you should live for ever at Euphorbia."

"I mean to live for ever at Euphorbia," replied he; and my swelling heart, Clonmore, at this reply, felt a relief which filled my eyes: for my worst apprehensions were thus quieted. Until now, I feared he regretted England, and wished to return thither.

"Oh, Claudy, my dear," he continued, "I never mean to quit this house, or you. But cases differ. Papa Eliot is a rich baronet; and has sufficient employment to take care of aunt Grantley, and you, and me, (the word *me* confirmed my best hopes;) and all his servants.

You know he has to provide for us all. (I was glad to hear him add *himself* to the list.) But when I become a man, (continued my beloved boy,) and am walking the streets of Orotava, or Santa Cruz, (most rejoiced was I, not to hear the streets of London or Paris named,) or visiting among our friends, or with guests here, when people shall say, ‘Who is that *Dudley* Clonmore? What is he?’ I should like the answer to be, ‘He! Oh, he has great medical skill;’ or, ‘He has been lately called to the bar;’ or, ‘He is an excellent preacher,’ or ‘a brave and deserving officer;’ or ‘a very capital merchant.’ Instead of which, I should feel so mortified to hear them reply, ‘Who, *Dudley* Clonmore? Oh, he is nothing. His father, and his brothers are, indeed, so and so, —but he is —*nothing*. He lives at Euphorbia, and is —*nothing*!’ No, no, Claudy; I am determined not only to *follow* a profession, but to *rise* to the very tip-top of it, if possible; industry, merit, and honesty, my three stepping stones. Oh, how I should like to be a Sir Matthew

Hale, or a Gresham, or a Boerhaave, or a Newton."

"Or a Shakspeare!" said Claudy, archly.

"Oh, no, no, I'll not turn poet; besides, that is no *profession*, that is a *vocation*. Men are born to that. I'll never be a poet."

"Sour grapes," said Claudy.

This sarcasm produced a circular swing by the hands, when, in a fit of romps, they chased each other round and round the room, and about my chair, at the hazard of knocking that and myself down; then darted through the open door, and, shortly after, I saw them from the window, driving in their little curricule, Claudy, as I observed, having the whip-hand, and Dudley still talking to her with great earnestness.

And now, my friend, to open my mind upon this new subject.—Hitherto, I must confess, every thing has answered my warmest wishes; and I have not one doubt existing, but that, in less than six

years, Dudley will be my son-in-law. But how are these six following years (the most important of their youthful existence) to be passed, is the question? I must, like Prospero, (see how time flies! I am *Prospero* now; no longer a *Ferdinand*, as my lamented Claudina more than once called me in the days of our courtship,)—I must act warily; and, to cement their affections, separate them for a time. Dudley himself has furnished us the means. And it is now my design, that, in about three years, he shall, with your good leave, visit England, and study, by preference, the law. Bloomfield Rectory may be his headquarters, and Dr. H——'s house, in Cavendish-square, his London residence. Thus we are assured, that, whether in town or country, he will be in the best of hands.

He cannot follow a nobler study than that of the law; which, in his peculiar situation, will ensure to him two most essential benefits. He will be better able, hereafter, to protect his own property, (and, from the rapid increase of my

funds, that will be great;) and, likewise, have it in his power to afford justice to those unable to purchase it; whilst the dryness, and sober course of law-study, will operate as a check on the ardour of youth, and the unusual warmth of his disposition.

Thus, my friend, you see Dudley's predilection for some pursuit rather assists my plans than otherwise; and, as I firmly hope that the attachment between him and my child will be as lasting as it is now fervent and sincere, I think I hazard nothing by consenting to his removal to England: they will each learn by this separation what hold they have on each other's affections; and Dudley will have that liberty of choice in the affairs of the heart, to which every human being, particularly man, is so fully entitled.

Since writing the above, Dudley and I have had a long and ample consultation on the subject, and now you may look forward to numbering an LL.D. in your

family. He and Turner are at this moment ransacking the great library in search of authors on jurisprudence ; and I have already spoken, at his request, to one of our high Spanish law-officers of Canaria, to recommend some person adequate to give him necessary instructions ; for, as you may suppose, my friend, I wish his wonderful abilities and practice to be confined to the Canary islands, and never extend to Westminster-hall. On his removal to England, he may commence the study of Blackstone and Coke upon Littleton ; at present, we must look at home, and become acquainted, in a Spanish colony, with Spanish laws.

The change in your boy for the remainder of that day was truly whimsical : an air of gravity appeared in his face, and a tone of dignity in his voice ; he sat as if he was already on the woolsack, and addressed those around him, as if charging a jury. These boyish fopperies, however, soon wore off, or rather they were chased away by Claudy simply remark-

ing, "Dear Dudley, what is the matter with you? you are as stiff as the picture of Guy Faux."

"Well then, Claudy, to *relieve my mind*, will you take a run with me to gather osiers for the fishing basket Rosalva has promised to make me?"

Away, hand in hand, they were off; whilst Turner, starting from his chair in the middle of a grave conversation with me, ran after them, calling out, "Dudley! take me with you, for if one or other fall into the lake, you know I shall have to *fish* you out."

You may remark, my dear Clonmore, that in a shorter period than that which I have named for the removal of Dudley to England, I shall feel the necessity of laying some sort of restriction on the present unlimited freedom these children enjoy in the society of each other. Rely upon it, none will be required. Had I my choice of permitting Claudy to be the companion of half the boarding school-misses in England, and that of a young

lad such as Dudley, I should not hesitate in preferring the latter. Among *girls*, it is a hundred to one but what the subject of their private conversation turns on lovers and marriage, and that they become mutual confidantes; thus early poisoning each other's mind: whereas with a well-educated youth, such as my adopted boy, love will be the last subject discussed.

Dudley and Claudy, when alone, speak of their mutual studies, or arrange an intended excursion; plan subjects for pictures, compare the merits of authors, or repeat to each other pieces of prose or verse they may have committed to memory; their very separation during the hours of study giving a zest to their meeting, when study is at an end: and we always observe, that they have daily some important secret to communicate to each other, though half an hour may not have elapsed since they last parted. They now are accustomed to ramble in the forest and over the neighbouring mountains and valleys alone, occupying themselves with the various surrounding ob-

jects, every thing in nature being to them a subject of interest and admiration : the clouds, the sky, the trees, the bushes, all afford conversation ; they watch the flocks of birds ; they seek, without disturbing the nests ; they feed their antelopes ; they work in their garden, and attend to their fruits and flowers, without one thought that could raise a blush on the cheek of innocence.

Such are the objects that now exclusively occupy their young and tender hearts ; and when those hearts *do* begin to speak, it will be sufficient time to disturb this golden dream of happiness. — That those hearts *will* speak, and to each other, and at no distant time, I am fully convinced ; but it is not for Mrs. Grantley or me to hasten the hour, by adopting ill-judged measures of prudence : all we have to do is to watch in silence, and when we see the slightest deviation from their present conduct, which is that of the most perfect simplicity, candour, and open freedom of manner to each other at all times, to interfere. Led by parental and maternal vigilance, we must then,

at once, act with judgment and decision, and separate them, until (with exception to Dudley's occasional annual visits to Teneriffe) they become man and wife.

At present, no words can describe the perfect union that reigns between this darling pair ! Their decided knowledge of each other's taste and disposition, their mutual esteem, their confidence, their boundless affection, is most delightful to witness ! and I never see them, (especially when walking together in the open air,) without being reminded of the innocence and youth of angelic beings, fully personified.

So, so ! as Dr. H—— would say, nothing certain under the heavens, after all, Clonmore ! At the very moment of my writing an account of the mutual felicity of this happy couple, would you credit they were engaged, and for the first time in their lives, in the most serious, and, indeed, violent dispute ! Tears and apologies on the side of the lady, and silence or reproaches, and looks of high disdain,

on that of the gentleman, fully explained to us that something was wrong; but even at this moment, I am ignorant as to the subject of altercation. I have enquired of Mrs. Grantley, but she is equally surprised and afflicted (comparatively speaking, you will understand); and we have only to wait with patience until this irritation subsides of its own accord. We have to hope that "The sun will not go down upon their wrath."

The whole affair has been explained to me, and, as I suspected, Claudy has been to blame. About an hour since, I walked through the chesnut-wood to the stables, as is my daily custom, to enquire after my horses, particularly Saladin, a fine Turkish charger, given me by Zulvago, which had been wounded in some of his Spanish battles; and there I found Augusto and Romeri, two of the grooms, talking vehemently; the former, an old man, accusing the latter, a lad of eighteen, of impertinence and presumption, saying he ought to have asked the Señor (myself), and

not have listened to the directions of the donzella, who was little better than a child. On enquiry, it appeared that Romeri had persuaded Claudy, what an advantage it would be to the two beautiful Andalusian ponies, which Caroline had given her on her return from Madeira, would she consent to have their manes cut and their tails docked in the English fashion, like Lady Alford's coach-horses! Claudy, who considers the ponies her own property, and who still frequently is fond of the exercise of too much authority, gave orders that it should be done; when Romeri, in consequence, sent a skilful farrier from the city who prepared to perform the operation. Fortunately for the poor animals who were destined to undergo the latter barbarous mutilation, Dudley came to the stables on a visit to his own horse Malek Adhel, and with surprise, and indeed dismay, seeing what was going forward, asked the lad, had I given orders to that effect. Romeri, with some degree of insolence, replied, he had his orders from Miss Howard, and should not attend to any

others, at the same time turning to the operator he desired him to begin.

Dudley, roused to fury by this conduct, rushed quickly past Romeri, and pushed the farrier over his own fire (kindled to sear the meditated wounds); he then cut the ropes that tied the mules to a stake, unbound their tails, turned them both loose into the forest, watched them galloping off in full liberty, and followed them, to act still, if necessary, in their defence.

On receiving this account, I severely reprimanded the lad, Romeri, for his daring to take orders from a young girl as to the treatment of cattle; and gave Augusto strict charge, to watch that no operations of that nature should be executed on any of the horses: I then dismissed the farrier, and returned to the house.

It was collation-hour: the Balfours were with us, and their niece, Miss Macdonald, lately arrived from Scotland; otherwise we had no company, and I mentioned what had taken place. Soon

after, we remarked that Dudley, instead of joining Claudy and Rosalva, as usual, at their little table, on entering the room took a book, and a retired seat under the viranda, where he remained reading: shortly after, Claudy went up to him with a basket of fruit; but he declined taking any, and she, putting it down on the floor, continued standing at his side with all the humility of a culprit.

We soon perceived that the tears flowed down her cheeks, and in the low and beseeching accents of distress, I heard her say, "Indeed, Dudley, I wish you would believe me; I own I did wrong in giving directions to the grooms, unknown to papa. And I was to blame when I was in such a passion with you, on being told you had scolded poor young Romeri — but do not think me cruel: I am not cruel or hard-hearted, Dudley. I did not even imagine, that cutting their tails could bring one drop of blood — no, no more than cutting their manes."

"Is there, then," said Dudley, looking up to her with strong symptoms of indignation in his countenance, "is

there no difference in cutting your hair and cutting your ears ?”

“ Yes, I understand all that, now that you have explained it to me ; but when I consented to have my ponies docked, I considered that the men were to take the hair off their tails, the same as off their neck, and nothing more.”

I really thought, Clonmore, this very probable ; and, on hearing her apology, acquitted her in my own mind of intentional cruelty ; though, I added, we must have some conversation with my young Donna on this habit of giving the servants directions without my knowledge : leaving Mrs. Grantley to take her to task upon the violent fit of anger she had fallen into, on hearing of Dudley’s interference respecting her ponies, and his treatment of Romeri, her favourite equerry.

Though *I* was fully convinced of Claudy’s innocence with respect to cruelty, Dudley, it appears, was not : and I rather wondered how he could doubt her word, until I reflected that his irritation arose more from her anger expressed to-

wards himself, than from her preceding high crimes: his feelings had been violently roused, and he could not so easily subdue them.

Seeing that she still continued at his side, (and they looked an Adam and a repentant Eve,) he arose, saying, "I don't love you. — I did love you once, but I shall never love you again." And with great majesty he pocketed his book, and went slowly towards the heath-tree avenue, and disappeared at the entrance of the chesnut-forest.

Claudy looked after him some time, then sat down upon one of the marble steps of the viranda, and resting her head upon the seat he had quitted, her arms folded under her face, she gave way to the strongest emotions of grief. Both my sister and myself saw all that past; but we felt that, had we interfered, it must be to advocate the side of one against the other, which, by creating jealousy and distrust, might lay the seeds of future evils: we, therefore, agreed to leave them, as if already man and wife, to their own time and mode of reconciliation; and,

accompanied by the Balfours and their niece, we strolled towards the woods. — About an hour afterwards, being seated in the almond-tree recess, as it is called, (being built of that wood, and shaded by its boughs,) we discerned at a distance, coming towards us down the green avenue, Dudley and Claudy, an arm of each round the other's waist: they were walking rapidly, and with that light elastic step that seems scarcely to touch the earth, and speaking eagerly and with smiling animation, Dudley sucking a peach as they passed: thus they went by, without taking the slightest notice of any of us, though full in their view: we merely heard him say, "Besides, their fine long manes and tails are to whisk off the flies; you ought surely to have considered that, Claudy."

"Certainly I ought, my dear Dudley," she replied; "but, now, will you assure me —"

We heard no more: they passed on down the long dark-green walk, canopied with high trees, and among the foliage of underwood we soon lost sight of their young and graceful figures, which dis-

tress and animation had rendered lovelier than ever.

This trifling incident has not been without its use ; it has served to display the strength of mind and courage of Dudley, his humanity, and particularly his independence of spirit, which would not submit, even to his darling Claudy, when he considered her to be in the wrong. — It has given my child a good lesson on her thoughtlessness and imperious turn of character, and has made me still more wary, when the safety of the brute part of my family is in question, in the conduct of my servants.

Of course I took notice of the above affair to Dudley the next morning, when, as I expected, whilst I blamed Claudy, he excused her. Having ordered our horses, we rode down together to the beach, for the purpose of swimming, and by degrees started a variety of subjects ; among others, the predominant advan-

tages of civilized and uncivilized life. — I will spare you the detail of our arguments, Clonmore, and wind up the account of our excursion with assuring you that Dudley would make no despicable figure as a college *wrangler*. When we reached the sequestered and lonely beach the tide was high, and the tops alone of huge scattered rocks appeared at some distance before us. I sat down on a high bank, leaving our horses in the care of Augusto, whilst Dudley stripped, and, with Carlo, ran down the steep and plunged into the water. After swimming some time, he climbed to the top of a high pointed rock that rose from the sea, and round which the water appeared calm as a lake, and there stood some time erect : his white body in the sunshine, relieved by the dark sea, looked like a fine statue emerged from the waves. Whilst Carlo in vain endeavoured to gain the same station, the slippery weeds forbidding his ascent, and as often as he struggled to get a footing, he fell back into the water ; Dudley, having stood

thus some time, plunged headlong from off the rock, swam to shore, and joined me.

“ Did you fancy yourself the Belvidere Apollo,” I asked, “ that you there stationed yourself to be admired of the gulls, the puffins, and the eagles ?”

“ No,” he replied, whilst putting on his clothes, “ I was admiring myself.” This was said with the most striking simplicity. — “ As I stood naked upon the rock yonder, I fancied myself as if newly come from the hands of my Creator ; and I felt glorying in my own perfections : here, as I stand, I said, I owe all to my God, and nothing to my fellow-man. The glow after swimming and the warm sun-beam made me *feel* health in every limb. I tried the clearness of my *sight*, by marking distant objects ; I *listened* to the various sounds of leaping fish, of murmuring waves, the songs of the land-birds, the flapping of wings, and the buzz of insects. The *fragrance* of yonder grove of orange and lime trees was blown to me by the soft breeze ; and I

was *eating* a cluster of raisins, which I had held by the stalk in my mouth whilst swimming : thus I proved, that all my senses were equally acute and perfect. I felt as if dropped from the skies, and seemed to wish to soar again ; and I cried, ‘ Oh, that I had wings like the dove !’ It is very singular,” he continued, “ that when I am naked, I always feel inclined to fly away ; and with my clothes on, I feel as if tied to the earth.”

These remarks led us to speak of the senses and faculties, and I particularly inculcated my advice respecting the preservation of *sight*, on which so great a proportion of the happiness of life depends. Every habit, however apparently trifling, that can injure that most precious of all the senses, I observed, ought to be even religiously avoided ; that we ought never to read a damp book, (the heat of the eyes serving as a conductor to the vapour,) or even to write on paper unaired ; never to indulge in study at night, or to read whilst walking or riding ; the certain consequence of which habits

produce vertigos, swimnings in the head, and not unfrequently failure of sight.

We will allow, Clonmore, that there are abundance of irremediable evils in the world, of unavoidable accidents, which no human prudence or foresight could avert. Yet, generally speaking, if we come fairly to examine the cause of most of the calamities under which the human species suffer, shall we not find that they are owing to our own fault; although we frequently call the results of our folly, the dispensations of all-ruling Providence? Think of the many evils derived from excess, from over study, from anxiety, from neglect, imprudent travelling, and late hours.

A friend of mine, for many years a paralytic, lost in a few days his excellent state of health, by his own obstinacy, in inhabiting a new house, the mortar of which was scarcely dry, and the paint still wet; and yet I have heard him, in the usual canting stile, observe, "My sufferings are the will of Heaven, and I

must submit." Heaven never desired him to go into a damp house ; on the contrary, he was endowed with reason, to teach him to shun it.

Another worthy acquaintance, instead of taking the *inside* of a mail-coach one dark December night, when travelling to town, to be ready the next day for a Christmas dinner, preferred a seat on the roof ; the coach was overturned, and he a cripple : here neither life or death occasioned his journey, but simply good cheer. " His affliction is great," was the cry, " but it is the will of God." A third lost his sight by a rheum, which ended in a gutta-serena, caught when poring day and night over the damp and endless parchment documents of a lawsuit. A young girl—you remember Harriet Chetwynd ; she was entreated by her mother to put off a visit to a friend, to whom she had promised to be bride's-maid : a heavy shower of sleet had fallen in the night, her horse fell with her into a pit of drifted snow, and dislocated his shoulder ; she proceeded, after con-

siderable delay, to the house of her friend, and a rapid consumption and early death were the consequences of a cold at that time taken. A youth, a relation of my own, a midshipman, was drowned off the Eddystone, by the upsetting of the boat he was in, which, with three others, was rowing in a heavy sea, for a wager.

And we calmly remark, "Such are the dispensations of Providence!" No, my friend, I most sincerely believe from experience and observation, that *all* the good we enjoy in this life is derived from the Almighty, and that most of the evils, if not the whole, arise from our own folly, or carelessness, or wickedness. Ten parts of all the mischief that is to be found in the world, I verily imagine, proceed from spending those hours in excess, in company, or even in study and business, that should be devoted to sleep. "Children of light," and "children of darkness," may be literally applied to society, as at present formed; and though it is utterly impracticable to adhere to that law, by which the brute creation is

governed, of rising with the sun and going to rest with the same, many good effects might be ensured, could we keep to that rule as closely as the interests of society would permit.

On a slight perusal of the newspapers and other periodical publications, we shall find that more than half the accidents and disputes that disturb the peace of the world, occur after the going down of the sun. Of course a medium must be observed, and we may infer that the curfew law of William the Conqueror had no bad moral tendency, whatever might be its political error. Were each family in every great city shut within the safeguard of its own home, soon after that hour, neither our prisons nor our hospitals might be quite as well stocked as they are at present.

To return to Dudley. — He is, at present, in good train. His religious principles are fixed. He has a thorough conviction of his dependance on God : he looks up to him as all in all ; and al-

ready knows no earthly medium between his heart, and the Maker of that heart. He loves his parents, his brothers, his sisters, me, Mrs. Grantley, and Claudy ; respects and admires others, but adores his God alone ; and looks upon us, as equally with himself, dependent upon the great Creator and Giver of all things. Accustomed now to solitary prayer, he feels himself, daily, responsible to the Almighty for his actions of that day. He is amenable to Him — grateful to Him ; confiding, and true. Never, I am convinced, will he suffer himself, when encountering the world, to be seduced to go one way, when the law of God points out the other.

He has hitherto reserved one form of homage, that of kneeling, as due to the Almighty alone ; and I actually think, that, were a ducal coronet the reward, he could not be tempted to bend his knee at court, having, I repeat, appropriated that posture to the holy purpose of prayer. He would, at least, feel as reluctant to obey, as any of our noblemen, when desired to do homage in the court of China.

However, our young lawyer will never, I judge, be put to either of these trials; for his future fate seems to mark him as my successor in the hermitage of Euphorbia; whilst the virtues he at present displays, convince me that he will be happy in the possession of that, and its pretty little mistress. When Dudley shall be united to my Claudy, I may boast that even courts might envy their happiness.

Adieu, Clonmore. I hope, when you write again, to hear some news of Mrs. Shelburne; and that, in my next letter, I shall have some intelligence to communicate to you concerning our friend Zulvago.

Ever yours,

ELIOT HOWARD.

LETTER XLIV.

Mrs. Grantley to Mrs. Clonmore.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Euphorbia, Teneriffe.

I HAVE selected this day, a truly happy one to me, to dedicate to your service. On this day my niece completes her fifteenth year; and you will, doubtless, credit me, when I assure you, that, in person and disposition, she far excels any girl of that age I ever met with. As her limbs have never been under the smallest restraint, nor back-boards, collars, straps, or ligatures of any kind, having been called into our service, most of which frequently occasion deformity, by causing the growing wearer to shrink from restraint, Claudy is, at this hour, as perfectly well formed, as graceful, as fair, and finely proportioned, as the most beautiful native of Otaheite, described in such

charming colours by our English navigators.

There is an ease, a polish, an elegance, and a dignity of carriage in her every motion, whether walking or riding, dancing or sitting, that is most truly pleasing to behold. And you may inform my sister Caroline, if you wish it, that Claudy's laced trowsers have, at length, wholly disappeared, and that the hem of her frock touches her ankle. Add to this, that she no longer plays at hoop, or marbles with Dudley, and seldom, if ever, is now seen flying a kite; and that other revolutions will, from this important day, take place.

Hitherto, as you have been already informed, they have never made a part of the drawing-room society; but have kept separate with Rosalva, employed on their elegant little manufactures. — Rosalva, from this day, will no longer attend them into company, among whom they are henceforward to mix, or not, at their own choice. They dined with us to-day for the first time, and conducted themselves, before a large so-

ciety, with the strictest propriety, without intrusion, and without bashfulness.

I do not know whether my brother informed you, that he is preparing the rooms which Mr. Clonmore occupied, when here, for Dudley. They are to be newly furnished; and, on his sixteenth birth-day, he is to take possession of them. We have undertaken to join our talents in producing ornaments for it. I have promised to work a border for a carpet, and a hearth rug, (for we adopt many English fashions,) as Dudley remarked to me, that though he was not entitled, from his youth, to study comforts, he loved to *study in comfort*. Eliot intends himself to paint the walls in fresco; and Claudy has undertaken to execute twelve coloured landscapes, twenty inches by sixteen, to decorate the walls. Mr. Turner lends his genius in the construction of a rosewood bookcase, (for he, as well as Dudley, excels as a carpenter and joiner,) and Rosalva is to

weave flower-baskets, and work covers for his chairs and sofa.

From the hour that Dudley and Claudy became reconciled to each other's society, (you, my dear Mrs. Clonmore, must remember that day,) it seems to have been the main study of her life to please him, and to accommodate and benefit him, as it has been his to protect and assist her. Claudy, with respect to her young friend, acts, as we often observe, with intuitive delicacy and judgment. On birth-days, and other remarkable eras, presents are regularly exchanged between them ; but she never yet has offered him any thing of value ; though, owing to Lady Alford's profusion, she has trinkets of all descriptions in abundance, and some of considerable price. She gives trifles to Dudley, and, with grateful pleasure, receives trifles in return. On her ninth birth-day, as I well recollect, the young lady, without a single blush, presented your son with a pair of blue silk garters, the workmanship of her own hands, and

received from him a bosom-friend of cygnet down, woven by himself.

This morning she presented him with a watch-chain of her own hair, and a small gold seal, in exchange for the platting of a straw bonnet, that Rosalva is to make up for her, and which, he said, he hoped she would greatly value, as he must now resign these innocent and boyish occupations, for those of a more serious nature; and, henceforth, give his mind up to study, that he might, in time, become a great barrister. Claudy looked surprised; as if she really expected he would, with her, continue platting straw, and weaving mats, to the end of his life.

On the contrary, (agreeable to the independence of her character, which, with all our care, will still, at times, show itself,) she makes Mr. Turner the richest and most valuable presents; and this, with the haughty ease and generous dignity of an English princess, heiress to a crown, when addressing one of her chaplains! Claudy's idea is to join her father in recompensing Mr. Turner for

his care of Dudley ; but, after accepting two or three of these gifts, at my brother's urgent desire, he had the sense and delicacy peremptorily to refuse taking more ; and on her carelessly saying, this morning, at breakfast, " Mr. Turner, this is my birth-day ; catch and keep : " and throwing him a large and superb gold watch, one of the four given her by Caroline, and which had belonged to Lord Alford, he returned it. It was in vain that Eliot pressed him to keep this token of his pupil's esteem : (for to him is Claudy indebted for her knowledge in writing, in accounts, and geography.) He refused ; and, with something like displeasure, added, " If Miss Howard can set no bounds to her generosity, I must to my avarice. I keep what she has already given me ; but I receive no more of her presents."

Claudy, arrived at this age, possesses, my dear madam, no splendid talents, or even shining accomplishments. She cannot entertain a brilliant company, even

for half an hour together, by either her playing, or her singing. She does not excel in opera-dancing ; she has little or no wit ; and was never known to utter a repartee. But, as a set-off to these negative acquirements, she can converse, in a large society, with propriety, and in a smaller, with vivacity. When, with only our own family, she keeps up the ball of conversation with spirit. With one person only, she is, perhaps, most charming ; and when in perfect solitude, truly happy in herself.

Add to this, my niece understands, already, how to fulfil the duties of a sick chamber ; for, in the little illnesses to which, with all our care, human nature is subject, she has been the nurse of her father, of myself, of Rosalva, and of her own nurse Morton. She attended the sick bed of the aged Martella ; and, by chance, was the only one present in the room to close her eyes, when, after a lingering disease, the worthy creature breathed her last.

In the chamber of the invalid, Claudy is the noiseless, gliding assistant; the gentle guardian, the tender, anxious, yet cheerful nurse. With regard to her own health, it is invariably excellent; for, having been blessed by nature with a sound, and, indeed, robust constitution, it was my endeavour early to teach her the value of the privilege she enjoyed; but this was only effected, by at length taking the care of her health out of the hands of her nurses, and other servants, and putting it into her own care.

Until I adopted this plan, we were for ever annoyed by Morton following the child, throughout the house and gardens, with shawls, and bonnets, and shoes, in order to wrap her up, and prevent her taking cold; and yet, with all these precautions, Claudy was never free from ailment. At last, I told her seriously, (she was about ten years old at the time,) that as swelled eyes, a red face, and other symptoms of a cold, were not pleasant companions in a drawing-room, she should, on the next time of taking any illness, *through her own fault*, be

confined to her chamber three weeks from the day of her recovery.

Of this threat of punishment, she made very light at the time, saying, with a little toss of disdain, of which she instantly repented, " I am very happy in my own chamber." A few days afterwards, being out walking with her father, they were caught in the rain: no evil consequences, however, could have resulted, had she, as was desired, instantly changed her dress, and, particularly, her shoes and stockings, on returning to the house. These precautions were neglected; for whilst running towards her room, in the full intention of obeying, something in the way caught her attention, and neither shoes nor dress were changed, for many hours afterwards.

A severe illness was the result; during which, she was most carefully attended by both her father and myself. She recovered; and, forgetting the penalty, was rejoicing in the idea of once more leaving her room, and joining us below, when came the full and firm prohibition, which put her under a species of qua-

rantine, and cut her off from society, for the period above stated. She was now aware that the punishment was most grievous, particularly as all communication with Dudley was prevented. When the time expired, the meeting of the children was truly affecting and delightful. He reproached her carelessness, and hinted, that he had also been the sufferer. Since which time, she was observed to be more careful of her health; and often has he been heard, at their return from a walk, to remind her of changing her shoes; and seen to produce a spare silk handkerchief from his pocket, to tie round her neck, of a damp, raw evening.

When attacked by real and unavoidable illness, Claudy and Dudley submit to constraint, and confinement, with cheerfulness; for no self-reproach mingles with their momentary weariness. If able, they occupy themselves, in the day-time, as well as they can; and in the silent hour of night, when unable to sleep, repeat aloud some of the psalms, or hymns, or other pieces of poetry, or

passages in prose, with which their minds are richly stored. Claudy has told me, that, frequently, she remembers beginning to repeat one of the above, but seldom coming to the conclusion, as sleep overtakes her about half-way.

As my brother has already informed you, they both enjoy, as yet, the most perfect liberty of communication, which neither he or I have had any reason, hitherto, of restricting. The time must come; but we do not wish to anticipate it. At present, we feel confident that they do not spend an hour alone together, whether in the house, or in their walks, and rides, that does not tend, in some shape, to their mutual advantage.

A few years more, and education will end; and then, I trust, that our hopes will be realised. Should it please Heaven to spare my life, until I can lay my hands on the innocent heads of these dear children of my affection, wedded to each other for the remainder of their existence, as they are now united in the bonds

of purity and sympathy, I shall not have a wish ungratified. — I shall then, in peace, look forward to my own dissolution, when I hope, through the mercy of the Lord, to be united to the spirits of my own departed blessed children, in the mansions of peace and happiness.

With every sincere and kind wish for the increasing happiness of my dear Mrs. Clonmore, her worthy husband, and their young and promising family, I remain ever their attached friend,

JANE GRANTLEY.

LETTER XLV.

Sir Eliot Howard to the Rev. Henry Clonmore.

Euphorbia, Teneriffe.

I KNOW not, Clonmore, what faith you put in the supernatural conveyance of intelligence respecting the welfare of distant friends by means of dreams, in which many of the old ladies of my family, I can remember, used to place great confidence. But if, in your sleep, you or Mrs. Clonmore have seen Dudley at the point of death, I hope you have also since beheld him in your visions, restored not only to life, but to his previous state of robust and glowing health.

Thanks to the blessed Author of our being, and Preserver of our existence, our dear children (for they have *both* been on the verge of the grave) are permitted once more to become the charm of our society! It is now up-

wards of a month since this unfortunate event took place ; and they are now, if possible, more healthy than previous to their illness, such is the peculiar excellency of their constitution.

I believe I mentioned to you my intention of permitting Dudley, under the care of Balfour and Turner, to make an excursion to the summit of the Peak, and to undertake a water-expedition through our little Canarian archipelago. The present summer was named for the purpose ; and on the 1st of last May the adventurers set out, Turner, with great importance, having duly prepared a large blank pocket-book, to take notes of the tour, which he intimated his design to publish at some future period ; and Dudley, on my recommendation, and to gratify Claudy and me at his return, following his tutor's example, though without being stimulated by the ambitious aim of turning author.

Three weeks passed, at the end of which period the travellers returned, when my chaplain appeared to fancy himself at least as great as Saussure, his

predecessor to the crater of the Peak, and to be on a par with the first circumnavigator in the world. Dudley's feelings were very different ; for in the transport produced by his return home, (from whence he had never been separated for so long a time since his first arrival in the island,) he seemed to forget his journey, and to be solely occupied with Euphorbia and its inmates. Turner, his thoughts still engaged by his travels, took no notice of surrounding objects, whereas Dudley, in his eagerness to learn what had taken place in his absence, scarcely answered our enquiries. And this anxiety to us was most whimsical ; for though he had been absent not more than three weeks, he conducted himself as if he had been gone three years. He appeared to expect the seeds he had sown blown into flowers ; his antelope to have young ; and his unfledged birds ready to become, in their turn, parents.

These last three weeks had, however, Clonmore, been spent with us at Eu-

phorbia in the deepest solicitude and distress. About four or five days after the departure of the travellers, a sort of contagious fever, of the typhus kind as it appeared, broke out at Santa Cruz. It was brought to Euphorbia by one of the men-servants, communicated to others, and the infection spreading notwithstanding all our care, Claudy took it, and on the sixth day sickened. The absence of Balfour, at such a time, was particularly distressing, as in all our little illnesses, he had hitherto attended her from childhood. We had, however, recourse to the best medical advice Orotava could boast; and I sent a special messenger to Madeira for Dr. G——.

Turner and Dudley returned from their excursion on the very day when the disorder of Claudy was at its crisis; and as I met them purposely, and alone, to prepare the latter for the evil intelligence, which I wished him to hear from me rather than from any other, I sat some time listening to both in silence, until Dudley remarked my gravity, and enquired the cause; at the same time starting briskly

towards the door, he added, "Now to seek my own dear Claudy, — I have a thousand things to say to her. Where is she?"

I called him back; and in few words made him acquainted with what had taken place in his absence. His sudden paleness and consternation, (as if he had thought Claudy invulnerable to illness,) were, at first, alarming; but I reminded him, that he was now called upon to show his fortitude and piety; that this was but one of the many trials to which his future life might be exposed; and that, at his age, it was time to give some proofs of manliness and self-command. I concluded with exacting a solemn promise, that, as the disorder was highly contagious, he would, with Mr. Turner, go immediately to Ben Lomond, and not return from thence until summoned by me. Their excursion had ended much sooner than I expected; otherwise I should not have been thus taken by surprise.

Dudley was, however, reluctant to obey; and it was only after many vain

and repeated entreaties that he might only take one look at Claudy, and but exchange one single word, that he prepared to follow my directions. For this purpose he went with me out of the room, and across the lower corridor, towards the library, to select such books as might be wanted for his studies. At that moment we heard the loud scream of a female voice, and on looking towards the upper passage over our heads, saw and heard Morton, who, in all the agonies of despair, (and she, at the instant, resembled the nurse of Juliet,) was exclaiming, "She's dead! She's dead!"

Never did the feelings of nature, and those of adoption, undergo a more severe conflict, than at that instant with me. I felt as if my heart had received a fatal blow; and yet, I had presence of mind firmly to grasp the arm of Dudley to detain him; but the attempt was vain: he wrenched himself from my hold, sprang up the stairs, and disappeared. I had only to follow.

At the first sight, on entering the sick room, I could perceive, by the

countenances of Mrs. Grantley, and of Balfour, who had been summoned, and of the other medical men, that life was not extinct. This was the crisis of the disorder.

After a long and painful struggle, Claudy had fainted; which appearance Morton mistaking for death, had imprudently and abruptly quitted the room: had not Dudley unfortunately heard her words, they would have been of little consequence; but now the evil was too late to remedy. On my entrance, he lay in a swoon across her bed. It appears that, to the grief and surprise of all present, (for I had taken upon myself, when I quitted them, on hearing of his arrival about half an hour before, to send him to Ben Lomond,) he had rushed into the room, opened the bed-curtain hastily, grasped her hand, which lay upon the quilt, and fallen deprived of sense or motion.

From that hour Claudy recovered, and Dudley sickened. Owing to the state

of irritation in which his system had been thrown at the moment of taking the infection, the disorder appeared in him under the most malignant form ; and at one period, I felt as if I could with pleasure have lain down, and died beside him.

Be, however, under no apprehensions, Clonmore ; for, thanks to the Almighty, they are at this present moment of my writing, walking arm-in-arm on the orange-terrace, in view of my study window. I perceive that they often stop, as if to examine some insect on a plant ; — they appeal to each other — there is certainly a greater degree of slowness in their steps and movement, than before this illness, resulting doubtless from the languor inseparable from a state of convalescence ; Claudy appears weary, and they seat themselves on one of the benches under the trees. He speaks earnestly to her, and I should imagine she gives him no answer ; for he seems to repeat his question : she now turns away her head ; she rises, and as he gives her his arm, I perceive him clasp with his

other hand, *her* hand, which is not withdrawn, and they renew their walk.

Yes, my friend, my hour is come, or rather *their* hour is come ; and an instant separation must take place. As you well know, I did not intend to part with Dudley until his eighteenth year ; but the circumstances that have attended their recovery prove to us the necessity of changing our plans ; wherefore, instead of a twelvemonth, you may expect to see him in less than six weeks.

The circumstances I allude to are these : — As no possible danger could result to *Claudy* on her recovery, she was allowed to pay a visit to your son, when he was sufficiently able to be removed for change of air to his little study. She found him very busily engaged supping his chicken-broth, for which I was cutting most scientifically toasted bread in squares and diamonds. Mrs. Grantley accompanied my child, saying, “ I bring you a new visitor, Dudley ; I suppose Claudy is welcome.” Instead of, however, receiving

her as we expected, particularly after so long an absence, he gave but one look at her ; his face became flushed, when he continued to swallow his broth, and with such evident voracity and heedlessness, that I was forced to remove it from him. Of this he took no notice ; but putting his handkerchief to his face, he turned from us all and concealed his head in the deep cushions of his chair.

Claudy on her part, to whom it had been impossible to hide in what way Dudley had caught his illness, now acted wholly different to what we looked for. Although she had not seen him since he had quitted Euphorbia on his tour round the island, she did not as usual, after even a day's absence, run to him with enquiries, and take and kiss and stroke his hand. No, no, all that was over with them. — Does not the first consciousness of pure and innocent love, Clonmore, ever seem doomed to appear under the semblance of indifference, if not of aversion ?

Claudy sat down on the chair nearest the door, more awkward and embarrassed than in my life I had seen her. Mrs.

Grantley and I, after glancing at both of them, exchanged looks ; when I rose, observing to my sister, that as Dudley had now two companions for half an hour, I wished to ride over to Ben Lomond : the reply was ; “ Then I have a message to send by you to Mrs. Balfour ; ” and we were quitting the room together, when our surprise was increased on perceiving that Claudy was preparing to follow us.

Still resolved not to interfere, I took no notice of this unusual conduct, but was not displeased, on my turning round to bid Dudley good-by, to see him—(and with a face all radiance, and eyes filled with tears—in short, with every symptom of strong and powerful affection,) extend his hand, saying, “ Claudy : ” the tone of his voice was the music, as his look was that of love.

She turned, she caught his glance, she rushed to his side and sat down by him. As their hands were fondly clasped, she hid her face on his shoulder, and wept.

I then found it necessary to speak. “ Oh, oh ! your capricious little lady-

ship," I said, " will condescend at last to take notice of our poor invalid ; but take care, Dudley, you know Claudy is an incessant chatterer ; she will either talk herself, or make you talk, until you are heartily weary of her." I could perceive them smile and blush as their eyes met ; and I think you will laugh at my folly, when I own I should not have been sorry to see a kiss pass between them, on such an important occasion as the restoration of each to life. But no, kissing days are over, it appears ; and as that is the case, it is high time they should say " Farewell," until old enough to be regularly considered as betrothed to each other.

Prepare then, Clonmore, to see, and shortly, this dear child of your's, this beloved son of my adoption, who has most amply fulfilled all my expectations, and whom, I trust, you yourself will pronounce as not unworthy of you. I calculate on receiving an answer to this letter in about five weeks, of course it will be such as I could wish ; and in furtherance of my plans, I reckon on

you, on ^{Mrs} Clonmore, and on Dr. H——. Write to Dudley yourselves by the same conveyance ; be diffuse in your account of the proper arrangements for his future course of study ; and keep up the stimulus of the benefit of a man having a profession, which predilection, spontaneous on his own part, I now regard as most fortunate : it offers the best motive for their separation, and the most effectual means of seriously occupying the mind of Dudley for the following three or four years.

Claudy's education will in that time be going on, and at twenty be complete. Occasional excursions to Ben Lomond, our Teneriffe cities, Madeira, and the other neighbouring islands, will sufficiently extend her knowledge, amuse her mind, and help to shorten the time when Dudley will return to us and for a permanency. He is of an awkward age to be saddled with a tutor ; too young to be left entirely to his own guidance ; yet too old to be put under any degree of ostensible restraint. Were he going to any part of the continent, or on a

long voyage, I should certainly send Turner with him ; but when I consider the shortness of the passage, and that on his arrival in England he will be immediately under your care and inspection, I feel tempted to let him go alone in an English frigate, which will sail from hence about that period. The Spanish lad Romeri (who, it is very singular, has become greatly attached to Dudley, from the very day on which the latter severely censured his designed cruelty and insolence to himself) shall attend him, and also old Robert, on whose conduct I can place the firmest reliance.

During Dudley's absence, the arrangements making in his new apartments shall be completed ; but this, I must confess, to be a blind concealing my real intentions (still in the Prospero stile) from both your son and my daughter ; for it is my sincere wish, that when our young lawyer shall have inhabited his bachelor rooms for the space of six months, he may exchange them for those of a directly contrary nature.

Your account of Caroline's happiness gives me the sincerest pleasure ; and I pique myself on great correctness of judgment in the opinion I had formed many years back of Cavendish. I hope her young family may be the means of endearing her to her home.

No news yet of Zulvago. I am convinced he has written to me or to Balfour, but that his letters have miscarried. I have sent one hap-hazard to Calcutta, and wait the result with the utmost impatience.

With the kindest wishes to Mrs. Clonmore, and our venerable Esculapius,

I am ever your's,

ELIOT HOWARD.

LETTER XLVI.

Sir Eliot Howard to the Rev. Henry Clonmore.

Euphorbia, Teneriffe.

YOUR letter and that of Dr. H—— arrived yesterday, my friend; and this answer of mine will be delivered to you by Dudley himself. I am rejoiced that you and the Doctor approve of my determination respecting the immediate departure of my adopted son. As the letter truly remarks, I have, indeed, “nicked my time:” had I separated him earlier from Claudy, it would have been at the hazard of their attachment not taking that decisive turn, which now leaves no longer a doubt on the subject; later, would have led them to come to some mutual explanations, rather interfering with the progress of those studies requisite towards the finishing the education of the one, and the gaining a knowledge of the world in the other.

I repeat, this letter will be given you by Dudley ; wherefore I shall continue it from day to day, according as circumstances occur, and not seal it until the very last moment of my parting with my boy. My *boy* ! a full grown youth nearly six feet high !

The letters arrived yesterday during breakfast, when I, as usual, distributed them to their several owners ; and Dudley, of course, received those to himself. But for my thorough knowledge of Mrs. Grantley's native simplicity of character, so truly *well-timed* are her *out-of-time* remarks, that I should suspect they were the result of artifice ; on the contrary, they really spring from the moment, and are wholly without design. I, as you may judge, was perfectly aware of the contents of Dudley's letters, and at a glance was pleased rather than otherwise, (such at times the selfishness of my nature !) to see the deepest consternation and amazement spread itself over his face, and which, as he read on, increased to a most painful degree. Claudy, as I could perceive, when I turned round to

the table to pour out another cup of coffee, (for though I had twice asked her to fill my cup it remained empty,) Claudy had her eyes fixed on Dudley — I saw her change colour, and look as if breathless with alarm.

It was then that the oddities of Mrs. Grantley's character came to our relief:—"Claudy, my dear, your boot is unlaced, the lace will throw you down." Claudy held out her foot to Rosalva, who was standing near her, and Rosalva in her speed broke the lace.

"I must now change these boots," remarked Claudy, "for I have no more laces of the same colour;" and she left the room with her attendant.

In the mean time, Dudley was alternately flushed and pale; and at length, laying your letter and that of Dr. H—— very calmly on the table, he remarked, without addressing any person in particular, and with a sort of proud sullenness, as if an offer of the most insulting nature, from a stranger, had been made him, "Indeed I shall not quit Teneriffe. I have no design of quitting Euphorbia.

What have I to do with England, or England with me? I may wish to see my father and mother, and the rest of my family, it is true; but a visit to them is soon paid; and I shall return here again immediately. Teneriffe is my native place, I may almost say; and I have no design of quitting it." Thus saying, your young gentleman put his hands into his pockets, after *Zulvago's* fashion, and leaving his letters on the table, calmly walked out of the room.

Here, *Clonmore*, was the genuine language of passion,—the first trial of love! A separation from the object of his affections, was, to him, the same as a death-stroke; and after this hour I wanted no other proof of the state of his heart: for you are to understand, that, previous to his illness, his removal to England, and his matriculation at *Oxford*, preparatory to his entering on his profession, had been repeatedly, and at all times the subject of our conversation. The source of the change was easily traced; and as I felt confident that his reluctance would, in the end, yield to

my arguments, I felt secret transport at this strong predilection he now professed for a place, of which I hope yet to see him master.

Mrs. Grantley and I, thus left alone, formed our own conclusions, when I requested her to go and break the news to Claudy, whilst I should speak seriously to Dudley on the subject, before even they could meet, and discuss it in their own fashion. — For this purpose I rang for Robert, and desired him to tell your son I wished to speak with him. The answer was, that Mr. Clonmore and Miss Howard were gone out riding on horseback, and would not return until collation-hour.

I have just parted, in the forest-walk, with Dudley, with whom I have had a conversation that lasted upwards of two hours; and never was I more convinced of the headstrong nature of youthful passion, than on this occasion. I did not attempt to remind him, that, in choosing a profession, he had not even

consulted me or you, or that he had done it in such a manner as to convince us he was determined to follow his own inclinations, on which the happiness, or otherwise, of his future life, in a great measure depending, we had assuredly no right to object. He positively asserted, that he could gain great proficiency in the law without stirring from Euphorbia! At all events, without quitting Teneriffe! And at last reproached me with unkindness, and a wish of getting rid of him. Of this, of course, I made light; and judging it better to go upon another tack, I looked steadily in his face, saying, "Previous to your illness, you were willing, and indeed anxious to go to England; why are you now averse to quit Teneriffe?"

This he could not stand. His averted cheeks were crimsoned. As it was too soon to come to an *eclaircissement*, however, (as it is my wish to delay that eventful hour until his final return from England,) I did not follow up my question, but expatiated on the pleasure it would give you and his mother

once more to see him : I talked of the importance a town residence with Dr. H—— might prove, who, unless his gout and age prevented it, was fond of seeing at his table the literary characters of the day : and, finally, I mentioned my wish that he would, on their invitation, spend a few weeks now and then with Lady Alford and Captain Cavendish, both in London, at Richmond, and at Bath ; where he might mingle with first-rate fashion, and the higher classes of foreign nobility.

I reminded him that I had no objection to his taking a trip to France, and even paying a visit to the field of Waterloo ; of shaking hands with Blucher and Plátoff ; of dining with the Duke of Wellington ; and of taking off his hat to the King of Prussia, and the Emperor Alexander.

He smiled ; and I continued, “ Indeed, it is my desire that you should spend a few months on the Continent, from which our youth have been so long excluded. Prejudice and illiberality of opinion are, by travelling, removed ;

the mind is enlightened, the manners are polished ; and as you are already, to use Dr. H——'s phrase, ' Guarded by the breast-plate of religion,' I shall have little fear of you. I use the word *little* instead of *no* ; for remember, that though Hector was clothed in invulnerable armour, yet there was one small entrance by which the enemy effected his purpose.

" And now I am on this head, Dudley, let me warn you of a most serious danger which will surround you, and particularly in England." He looked surprised ; and I added, " the girls of our land are renowned for beauty and virtue, for lilies and roses ; — take care, take care, Dudley ; leave no pass in your heart undefended, or they will play most dreadful havoc with you."

This was touching the master-spring. He affected to laugh, but he also coloured ; and a silence of a few minutes followed. I wished, by making him doubt my intentions, to hold him in suspense ; and thus give a better security for his happiness ; for I repeat, they are both too young to be entrusted with the

secret of my most fervent wishes : and we all well know, from experience, that a state of suspense, on either side, is most favourable to the increase of affection.

I am so accustomed to read his mind, that I perfectly knew what was therein passing at that moment. We were walking slowly in the forest, when, as he had hold of my arm, I stopped, saying, " You will write to me regularly once a month ; that will not encroach too much on either your studies or your amusements. And let your letters be as unreserved and candid as your conversation. All I have to request is, that you will not touch, in any shape, on politics ; but reserve your opinions, be they what they may, until we meet again, which, I hope, will be next August twelve-month. You will spend a month or so here, and then return to England to prosecute your studies." As he gave me no answer, I repeated, " You will not fail in writing to me, Dudley ?"

" Certainly not. And I shall write to my dear Mrs. Grantley, also."

“ I hope you will,” I replied ; “ my sister is very fond of you ; and a letter from you will give her great pleasure.” A pause followed.

“ I shall write to Mr. Balfour, also.”

“ As you please ; but remember my restriction with regard to politics.” — Another pause.

“ May I, when in England, write to — to ——”

For the first time in his life, he hesitated whether to call my child *Claudy*, or *Miss Howard*. This was making a rapid progress, you will allow, on the road of sentiment, in which we often, in order to spring forward, find it requisite to go back a step or two. I caught up the word with eagerness, — “ To Claudy ? Oh, of course ; that admits of no doubt.”

“ And on what subject shall I write to her ?” he enquired, in a smothered voice of delight.

“ On that of love, if you like ;” and I smiled.

This displeased him, as if he was treated like a boy ; when I was forced

to add, " Well, don't be angry ; I don't wish you to be in love with Claudy, or any other fine girl ; but I have one request to make to you, if you *should* correspond, that you will take notice of any grammatical fault Claudy may commit in her answers to you ; any tautology, or inelegance of diction : thereby you will render her a real service, and turn even your absence to her profit ; for at present I have no great opinion of her talents for letter-writing, if I may judge from a very ill-written note of her's to Miss Macdonald the other day."

We had hitherto been walking slowly, but, within the last five minutes, he had increased his pace to that degree that I was unable to keep up with him, when, taking my arm from his, I remarked, " As you seem to be rivalling Barclay, the pedestrian, I shall leave you, and take a turn or two alone." He took no notice of this ; but, when about fifty yards from me, called out, " I shall write, also, to Jack Turner."

This was in imitation of Lady Alford ; when, for his punishment, at that mo-

ment the little parson appeared among the trees. Dudley saw him, and ran off, calling out, “ *Addio, Jack!*”

I guessed there was a point of attraction in the walk before us, which had escaped my vigilance, but had awakened his; and shortly after I saw, in the distance, Dudley and my promising daughter (who really seems resolved not to be behind him in love’s progress) walking together slowly up the green avenue, towards the vineyards.

Turner was following them, when I caught his arm, and went back with him towards the house. This was a fair opportunity to put into execution the plan I had long formed; and having first rallied him, on his permitting his pupil such familiarity, and he had vindicated his authority, by drawing up his head, and assuring me he would suffer it from no other youth than Dudley, we spoke of the approaching change, when I sounded him as to his wishes for the future, and whether it was his desire to return to England with Dudley, or to

remain with me in the sole capacity of chaplain, the tutorship being at an end.

I explained fully my intentions respecting himself; that the salary of four hundred a year, which he had enjoyed for the last ten years, should be continued to him under the form of a life-annuity; adding, whatever might be his determination would please me, as all I wished was, that he would consult his own happiness.

He replied, that he had already made up his mind never to quit Euphorbia; but corrected himself immediately, by adding, "that is, — Teneriffe."

I paused for an explanation; but, as he gave none, was forced to remark, "You have then some design of quitting me, Mr. Turner?"

"No," he replied, warmly; "no, Sir Eliot. The first wish of my heart is to be retained as your chaplain, and officiate every Sunday here as usual; and to be an occasional visitor, if you will allow me; and to be of any service in my power."

Thus he ran on with a whole string of *capabilities*, until I was convinced that something lurked behind all these professions, when I said, "Speak out, man: speak out at once. We have been ten years under one roof, and should have done with reserve. You are no youth now, and I am getting on in life. Speak, therefore, and let me know if I can, in any shape, stand your friend."

He caught the decisive tone in which I addressed him; and, as if plunging at once into the Rubicon, answered hastily, "You can, Sir Eliot. I love Helen; and, I think, am not indifferent to her."

I stopped, doubtful whether the man were insane or not, for this Helen seemed at the instant dropped from the skies into his imagination. "Helen who?" I exclaimed.

"Helen Macdonald, the niece of Mr. Balfour."

"Ho! ho!" and, as we reached the garden-steps that led to the house, I shook hands with him; "if that is the case, you have my hearty wishes for your success, and shall command my best

services towards promoting it : but you and Miss Macdonald seem on as familiar a footing as Dudley and yourself. For when young gentlemen and ladies come to speak of each other by their *Christian* names alone, they may be truly said to have marriage in perspective. I hope your beloved does not permit herself to call you Jack." He made me no answer, but with rapid strides walked off, and, as I afterwards found, dined at Ben Lomond.

Preparations for Dudley's departure on Monday next, should the wind prove fair, are going on rapidly. The permission to correspond with Claudy, I can see, has been the healing balm to the pains of separation, which would otherwise have been most acutely felt, particularly on the lady's side, who, situated as she is, with respect to this worthy object of her choice, must be pardoned, if she, in imitation of royalty, now and then steps a little out of the beaten path of female reserve.

It is all over, my friend, and I am this instant sitting in the cabin of the frigate in which Dudley sails for England, concluding and making up my dispatches for Bloomfield Rectory. I shall not seal until the final moment, when Balfour and I return to shore in the boat that brought us to the vessel, now at anchor in the roads of Orotava.

We had permitted Dudley and Claudy to spend the two last days as they pleased, and we observed that private walks in the forest and over the mountains had the preference to any other excursion. The morning came — we met as usual at breakfast; I in my tight shooting dress, he equipped for his voyage. The bell at the outward gate of Euphorbia rang, and at this signal that our horses were coming round, I started up; Dudley also rose, but slowly; he stood for one moment pale and trembling; he then advanced towards Mrs. Grantley, (Claudy was not in the room,) and she saluted his cheeks alternately, saying with more

than common emotion, "God bless you, my dear."

He could not utter a word. I looked anxiously through the windows, and watched the door, expecting at every moment to see Claudy, but she did not make her appearance; and my surprise was great, when he put his arm under mine, saying, "I am ready."

"You will not surely go away without bidding good-by to Claudy!" I remarked; when he answered, "I have bid *her* good-by."

"When, and where?" thought I; but that was their own concern, and I accompanied his hurried steps to the hall. At his request, I sent on the horses, Saladin and Malek Adhel, to wait for us at the bottom of the hill, on the summit of which, you may remember, is erected the flagstaff, the dinner-bell, and the Indian gong; and we followed on foot and in silence, winding along the narrow path, leading through the vineyards and mulberry groves, until we reached the iron gates of entrance.

I was making some remark on the

favourable appearance of the sky, and fair winds, when he with a sudden exclamation, on looking up to the heights, broke from my arm, and climbed the steep we had just come down, (but by a far more precipitate acclivity, for he had to surmount hanging rocks, and cling to the branches and roots of trees, even to secure a footing.) On looking after him until my sight was giddy, I saw him standing on the green velvet spot under the flag-staff, and by his side, a white dress floating in the wind.

“ More last words ! ” said I, as I turned away. I mounted Saladin, and rode slowly towards the city, frequently looking back, and still able to distinguish, high in the air, the tall, slim, dark figure, and the white drapery. “ A pretty *retired* place they have chosen for their final adieus ! half-a-dozen spy glasses pointed from the city, perhaps, at this moment, at my pair of *Unconscious Lovers*. ”

As they still seemed to have no idea of separating, and I was fearful of being late, I put forth all the powers of my

once famous hunting voice, and called aloud on Dudley. Echo repeated the name, and "Dudley! Dudley!" resounded from rock to rock. At last he rejoined me, but it was in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Balfour, and Miss Macdonald, who had all come to town to render any service to Dudley on his departure, and to entrust him with letters for Great Britain.

The spirits of your son from this new, and, as it appeared, accidental meeting, had acquired a fresh flow of cheerfulness, such are the magical effects of mutual love! And he parted with Mrs. Balfour with a gallant salute, and the niece, with a cordial pressure of the hand. How wide the difference here shown between taking leave of persons of whom he cares but little, and the expressive silence with which he parted with my sister, whom he loves next to his mother!

Balfour and I walked on each side of him to the beach, where we found a man-of-war's boat waiting to take us to the vessel. Whilst he and Balfour were exchanging commissions and compliments,

I took the opportunity of recapitulating all my orders to Robert ; desiring him to be careful and vigilant of his charge, until placed in your care, and also never to lose sight of Romeri, who in a strange country, and with no great knowledge of the English language, might otherwise be led into scenes of mischief and danger.

Dudley and I have just taken a farewell of each other, unseen by all eyes. — He kissed my hand, and I blessed him, and may God hear the prayer I offered in his behalf! — Adieu, Clonmore, I trust that you and his mother will find in him your best wishes realised ; and that, at the appointed time, I shall once again hold in these fond arms my dear and adopted son.

Your's,

ELIOT HOWARD.

LETTER XLVII.

*Don Zulvago, H. C. I. Conde d' Almeida, to Sir
Eliot Howard.*

Calcutta.

MY worthy friend, Sir Eliot, if he has not during the last five or six years spent by me in India, received the many letters I have written to him, must regard my silence as most unkind and ungrateful. And yet, my good baronet, it is neither; it has been merely owing to the consequences of war, to the chances of wind and waves, and the negligence of private friends. The French vessel in which I was sailing to Rochefort, was retaken off the Cape of Good Hope by an English man-of-war; when I, as a Spanish Patriot, being considered at liberty, was resolved to adhere to my first resolution, and proceed to India.

I pass over all intervening circumstances attending my arrival, my finding

the persons whom I sought, Sir William and Lady L——, who had removed to Madras ; my following them thither, and at last, meeting with them at Bombay. On again seeing Victorina, I fancied that I perceived in her some slight degree of pleasure ; but my image was no doubt associated in her mind with that of her mother.

A gratifying sentiment was involuntary on meeting so unexpectedly, at such a distance, and in the land of strangers, one whom she had met with in Europe, and in the presence of that parent, to whom she was so fondly attached. Some years were spent by me in the different Presidencies of India, and about a month since, I returned to Bombay, and once more saw Victorina, so dear to me as the child of my Gabrielle.

On Miss Shelburne retiring from the room soon after my entrance, Lady L—— communicated to me every particular relative to an attachment formed during my late absence, on the part of a Colonel Hamilton, in favour of her *protégée*, and which had induced him a few days

previous to my return, to offer her his hand in marriage. She had frankly accepted it, on condition he would wait until the expiration of her engagement with Lady L——, which wanted about a twelvemonth to fulfil her seven years of service. On his side, he wished her to forfeit the bond, saying he would pay it; whilst Lady L——, on her's, congratulated Victorina on her golden prospects, and released her gratuitously. — Such is the world, my friend!

Had Miss Shelburne captivated the affections of a poor and pennyless man, and returned them, her protectress would most probably have kept her to her bond with the utmost rigour of the law — the tenacity of a Shylock; but by giving up with a good grace a few months of her right to the services of this girl, she had a claim on the generosity of the Colonel, reputed to be worth upwards of a hundred thousand pounds; and who, the morning subsequent to her relinquishing the agreement, sent her some superb shawls and a diamond aigrette.

There is still a decided air of melancholy about Victorina, which I hope the total change in her circumstances will, in time, remove. It appears by Sir William and Lady L——'s account, that since her residence with them, she has conducted herself most irreproachably. Whilst uninterested friends, who have been admitted to their private concerts and brilliant assemblies, have assured me, that they admired, and equally pitied, this young person, who, dressed splendidly at Lady L——'s desire, went through the routine of duty; and looked, whilst singing or playing, a victim ornamented for sacrifice, or as a tuneful swan celebrating its own obsequies.

I was told, in confidence, that she had refused two offers which had been made her by men nearer her own time of life; and having some suspicion, on hearing that they were in limited circumstances, and only beginning the world in point of fortune, that money was the motive of her rejection, although she might otherwise feel attached, I took an

opportunity of speaking to her on the subject ; and had I received the smallest encouragement to think she nourished a partiality for either, would instantly have contrived to make her choice, in point of wealth, equal to the Colonel ; but such was not the case ; and she candidly confessed that this man, nearly double her age, and of infirm health, was her choice ; and would have been, had twenty suitors offered themselves to her.

“ But do you love him ? ” I enquired.

“ Love him ! ” she exclaimed ; “ I esteem, I respect, I honour him ; I feel grateful for his kindness ; and will live his wife, and die his widow. But as for love, I never have loved, I never will love. That passion was the source of all my mother’s sorrows. It is, indeed, nearly allied to hatred. May I, Don Isidore, never feel that sentiment which you call love.”

“ But,” I added, “ you were already eighteen when you quitted England, Victorina ; was there no attachment formed there, or in Spain ? Do not be precipitate : think before you act. Is

there no object nearer your own time of life, no matter his penury, his obscurity, his friendless state, (my wealth shall be his, my credit his, my friendship shall make him your's.) Confide yourself to me, my dear Victorina, the only child of my lost Gabrielle. Let me be a father to you in this most important step in life ; and, before it is too late, suffer me to annul your hastily-formed engagement to this comparatively aged man, and be the founder of your worldly happiness."

"Should you," she replied, her eye kindling with sudden fire, — "Should you prevent my marriage with Colonel Hamilton, you will be the founder of my worldly and eternal misery, as you have been that of ——"

She stopped ; and I was glad, for her own sake, that she did not continue the sentence. With more softness, she continued, "I am melancholy, it is true ; but sorrow and I have been so long a time friends, sadness is now become habitual to me ! I never knew the pleasures, the enjoyments of childhood, or of youth. My home, when young

and rich, was a scene of domestic warfare; and when peace was, by death, restored, poverty took up her abode with myself and mother. I wandered from house to house, earning the means of subsistence. My mother did the same, both in England and Spain. We tried families, schools, pupils at home: bitter, bitter hours! The life of a convent would have been a heaven to all this. We were alternately the sport, or pity, or scorn of insolence, of pride and arrogance, of meanness, and of selfish cruelty. No, no; I never thought of love. No one looked on me as an object of love. My mother alone, on earth, loved me. She held the first, the only place in my withered heart. Yes, withered in the bud; cankered by the worm of penury, before it had time to expand. The sunshine of peace and comfort never visited me. I was never a child; I was never young."

She ceased; and the tears gushed from her eyes.

I took her hand, and pressing it between mine, bade her be comforted, for

that better days were now before her, and said, "Remember your mother."

"Remember her!" she replied; "Need I be told to remember my mother! my fondest, dearest, blessed mother! Her letters to me have been my only comfort during our separation; (for she could not be prevailed on to accompany me.) They are my real treasure. She writes by every opportunity; and thus has time, and distance, and absence, been in a measure annihilated between us. This worthy man, this Colonel Hamilton, God bless him! who has honoured me with his choice, has consented, immediately after our marriage, to return to England."

She looked up, and with a sort of supernatural fire in her eye, gazed upon me, then bursting into a kind of wild hysterical laugh, that had something in it alarming and pitiable, added, "We shall return, and then I shall see my mother. We meet again, to part no more."

Another agony of tears followed; and, as I silently watched the progress

of the passions, felt convinced that those of Victorina were, at times, beyond her own controul.

“ Riches ! Riches ! ” she repeated, “ did I ever think that I should become rich. I’ll visit every spot in Spain and in England where I have known most sorrow. I’ll take luxury in going over the same dreadful ground, and in pointing out to my mother, and saying, ‘ from this house we were driven in the night by creditors, and slept on beds of straw in a barn, an outhouse, a stable. At this spot, do you remember our taking shelter from a thunder storm, and being harshly driven away ; for our appearance bespoke poverty, and we had not a single coin to purchase shelter. In this square, at the corner yonder, we had nearly famished, when a passing stranger, oh God ! gave some silver in alms ! These are the roads we trod together, with heavy limbs, and blistered feet, and bursting heart, to save yonder bridge, the passage of which was one single copper coin, and we had not even that to spare.’ My mother, oh my mother ! ”

Again I interfered, reminding her, that her duty to her Creator was to submit with resignation to his dispensations ; that those melancholy circumstances were gone by, perhaps never to return ; and that the advice of her best friends was to look forward to a happy future. I remarked, that Colonel Hamilton was in years ; but that, even should it please the Almighty to recall him from her, some future choice might ——

She stopped me, laying her hand on my arm, and with a vehemence that electrified me, an enthusiasm peculiar to the females of our nation, and of which you Englishmen can form but a faint idea, she fell upon her knees, and with uplifted eyes, and strained and clenched hands, before I was aware of the nature of her words, said, in a solemn and impressive tone of voice, “ Hear, O God ! O hear my prayer ! Bless my future husband ; and — *let me not survive him !*”

I felt shocked, and alarmed at her violence, and for some time hesitated, whether or not my presence did not in-

crease it. Whilst still debating how to act, — for, overpowered by her own emotions, she leaned her head on the seat of a chair, and wept, — I perceived the Colonel approaching, and took that opportunity of withdrawing, at an opposite entrance.

The next morning I again saw Victorina, when I reminded her, that as her happy prospects rendered the restriction to my making pecuniary offers to her mother null and void, she could no longer hesitate in informing me of every the most minute particular concerning her present situation ; adding, that as I should certainly take the first opportunity after her marriage of going to England, I might act as the messenger of good news, and prepare her mother for her return.

“ My happy prospects,” she replied, “ do not remove the restrictions ; and, therefore, your request cannot be complied with.”

“Is there then no hope?” I returned; “Can nothing restore me to your mother’s presence, her friendship, her confidence? May I not be permitted to sooth her bruised heart; to repair, in some measure, the mischief I have caused; and watch over her future days with brotherly protection. I now ask no more. Tell me, is there any hope, for you well know whether there is or no? I see there is one. Tell me, and I will attempt obeying her injunctions, whatever they may be.”

Victorina, with the bashfulness called forth by the great disparity of our years, looked down as she replied, (and, though her cheeks have no colour, her eyes, by their modesty, supply the absence of a blush) “My mother will be restored to your friendship, when she hears that — you are married.”

“Then,” I replied, rising, “your mother and I can never meet again; for unless she would, even now, consent to become my wife, I would neither ask, nor accept the hand of any woman on the face of the globe.”

“ In that case,” replied Victorina, “ I guard her secret ; which, however, can be no longer such, when my marriage is once made known.”

“ Most truly observed,” I said ; “ then I wait the event, and take the stakes into my own hand. We will, therefore, drop the subject. And you think you shall be happy, Victorina ?”

“ I trust I shall,” she replied, with openness and candour ; “ I repeat, my life has, until this my twenty-fifth year, been one invariable gloom. The clouds are now dispersed from over my head, and a beam of sunshine at length deigns to visit me. On being restored to my mother, I shall be completely happy.”

“ I shall quit India a few days after your wedding,” I replied ; “ will you entrust me with letters to your mother ? I will undertake to deliver them into her own hand.”

She hesitated, and I pressed ; when, with happy thought, she replied, “ As Victorina Sobrino, I am bound to obey my mother. When Victorina Hamilton, I shall be compelled to obey my husband : were *he* to command me —”

“ Enough,” I said ; “ and now, my child, before I quit India, tell me, is there any one service in which you wish to command me ? If there is, speak.”

“ There is,” she answered, with some confusion ; “ you call me your child — stand my father to-morrow. The Colonel assures me, he will receive me from none other than yourself.”

I saluted her pale cheek in silence, by way of thanks and consent, and my heart felt lightened of a load of misery ; for in that salute, I appeared as if I were reconciled to her mother !

The day is come ; and, in another hour, Victorina will be the wife of the worthy Colonel Hamilton. Adieu, my friend ; I shall most probably touch at Teneriffe in my way to England.

Ever your's,

The CONDE D'ALMEIDA.

LETTER XLVIII.

The Rev. Henry Clonmore to Sir Eliot Howard.

Bloomfield Rectory.

YOU can best conceive the feelings of joy with which I have passed the three last days. Dudley is now under my roof; whilst I write, he is with his mother and sisters in the next room to me, and that undescribable sentiment of wonder and transport attending the return of so beloved a relative, after so long an absence, has not yet subsided. None of his brothers are, at present, at home; but Dr. H—— is with us, having come down purposely to Bloomfield, that he might form an intimacy with Dudley, in this his home, previous to taking him with himself to town, where it is our design he shall spend part of the next winter.

He is, indeed, my dear Howard, all and more than our fondest wishes could

have expected ! much taller and more robust than any of his brothers ; yet, with an ease and dignity of manner, that strike us, at once, as that decided air of fashionable superiority, which foreigners of high rank so eminently possess. — What is most singular, and yet it is easily accounted for, having never been out of your sight since he was seven years of age, he greatly resembles you : the likeness is most striking — he has acquired not only the character of your face and feature by constant association ; but your tone of voice, your gesture, your walk ; in short, were he really your son, the resemblance could not be more perfect.

It struck us all, and even some of our servants who have a recollection of you ; and on our remarking it to Dudley, he replied with a gratified blush and smile, that he could not have studied from a more perfect model.

He arrived here on a Sunday : myself, and indeed all my family, except two of the servants, were at church. Dudley

having alighted at the door of the parsonage, sent Robert and the Spanish lad to make good their quarters in the kitchen, whilst he, having dismissed his chaise-and-four, strolled towards the church.

He had certainly no design of entering during service, and thereby hazarding a first meeting with us in so public a place; but forced by unavoidable circumstances, which he afterwards detailed to us, he *did* enter, and among a large party of fashionables; one of whom was Lord D——, who occupies a shooting-box in my neighbourhood.

The service over, the usual routine of bows, and courtesies, and nods, and enquiries took place, which I wish *my* parishioners, at least, would defer until fairly outside the porch. When the church was cleared, honest George Delver, my clerk, as rosy-cheeked and white-haired as ever, was helping me off with my surplice and gown, whilst talking on parish business; when we observed a gentleman, who stood at some distance with his back to us, and holding his hat

behind him, examining the monumental stones which adorn the walls.

“ Who is he ? ” I asked in a whisper ; (until now, our voices in the vacant church had sounded deep and hollow.)

“ Don’t know, sir,” said old George, “ but I shall just make bold to give him one gentle hint to depart.” This *gentle hint* was given thus : “ Would you please, sir, to go out of the church, for I must lock the doors.”

The person he addressed turned round hastily, the hat fell from his hands, he looked about eagerly, as if to see that no other person were present, and then sprung forward. One look was sufficient ; we were in each other’s arms ! I was forced to sit down for a few moments on the steps of the communion-table, and Dudley placed himself at my side.

With a lengthened “ Ho ! ho ! ” pronounced with great sagacity, my old clerk picked up Dudley’s hat, carefully placed it on one of the benches in the aisle, having first wiped it with the long skirt of his own coat, and went out at the

door, first giving me a friendly nod, as if to say, "Nobody shall disturb you."

He had scarcely left us ten minutes, however, when the door was as hastily opened, and widely, and again it closed; — a female figure had been admitted: — Dudley started from my side, and with a sudden spring forward, supported his mother from falling. A few drops of wine and water, with which my vestry supplied us, revived her, and she sat down between her son and me.

Louisa possesses neither the very poignant and acute feelings, that distinguished your late lady, nor the blunted feelings of Mrs. Grantley; and certainly not those of a variable nature, like Lady Alford's; her disposition is a happy mixture of the three: and after a short indulgence of the fond emotions of nature, I desired Dudley to leave his mother with me, and go and make himself known to his brothers, his sisters, the servants, the whole parish, if he pleased, and not meet us again until dinner time; which I was forced to remind him, was four hours after *noon*.

Once more together, Louisa and I looked at each other, and on the same spot, where you, Howard, was united by me to your Claudina, the godmother of our Dudley; where Louisa and myself were married; where we had both so often lifted up our voice in prayer to the Almighty, that he would spare the life of this very child; we now returned thanks and blessings that our prayers had been heard. He has, indeed, restored him to us, not only in possession of confirmed health, but in the full pride of manliness and beauty.

When Dr. H—— was informed of Dudley's arrival, he came down to the drawing-room, and my son being absent at the time, pretended with humorous gravity to watch the level of the key-hole of the door, and on his entrance slowly to lift up his open mouth and staring eyes to a stature of nearly six feet high: — then turning him round, he examined him from head to foot, and felt his arms and hands, when clapping him on the

shoulder, he cried out at last, "Well done Teneriffe!"

At this word the eyelids of Dudley became involuntarily red, but it was only for an instant; and I could observe, that if not already master of his passions, he is resolved on concealing their effects. He answers every question put to him concerning you and Mrs. Grantley — Turner and the Balfours, with cheerfulness and candour; but is not so unreserved respecting Claudy: and I am really glad that the Doctor is in our secret, respecting your future intentions with regard to this youthful couple; and as heartily rejoiced, that Lady Alford is not here at present, for she would not scruple to rally him on his love affairs, his constancy, his engagements under the Peak, &c. I hope she may spare her wit at his expense; and, if not, let conscience whisper in her right honourable ear, the magic name of "*Zulvago*."

We are returned from Oxford, where, according to your wish, Dudley has

been entered a Gentleman Commoner. His studies go on as usual; his mornings are devoted to his books, or to exercise on horseback, and his evenings to the society which our neighbourhood affords. The twenty-first of this month is fixed for his removal to town with Dr. H——, when he will proceed regularly with his professional studies; and in September, he returns again to us. In the mean time, he appears perfectly happy here, and in truth, how can he be otherwise, when he sees himself the object of universal admiration; and yet he possesses, to a high degree, that excellent quality of being ever on his guard to a forgetfulness of *self*. In him, in short, is joined all the high polish of the travelled foreigner, and the solid advantages of a domestic education. The beauty of his countenance, the expression of candour in his eyes, the grace and elegance of his deportment, are the themes of general conversation in this place; and though our son, Louisa and I really cannot find much fault with Miss Howard's taste.

One merit which in Dudley is most conspicuous, and which distinguishes none of my other sons, (at once the characteristic of highly civilised life, and of the most savage nation among the Indians,) is that perfect and undivided attention which he pays to the person who speaks to him : — no question, no impatience, nor any other object, can call off that attention ; he listens, he answers, and either continues the conversation, or with perfect propriety, contrives to turn it into another and more general channel. These graces may have escaped your observation, my friend ; for with you the boy has gradually expanded to the youth : with us, it is the young man come suddenly to our view. And even this very change of place may operate unconsciously on himself. He is considered by strangers as touching at manhood, and he acts and looks accordingly. To conclude, there is certainly more of gravity and deliberation in his manners and speech, than I was led from your letters to expect.

You have great difficulty in consider-

ing him, even now, otherwise than as a boy ; we, on the contrary, cannot imagine him a boy, and therefore, treat him as a man. Louisa pleasantly remarked the other day, she no longer wondered at Claudy's blushes and increasing bashfulness, which, until she had seen Dudley, she considered as prudish and ill-placed.

I have observed also that with most wonderful discrimination for his years, he suits his mode of address to the person to whom he is speaking : with age, he is invariably respectful ; and to that he sacrifices both opinion and inclination, when trifles are alone the subject, otherwise he is silent. With those of his own age, he hazards an objection, and does not decline an argument, but with his juniors, he himself gives advice ; and whenever requested by such to join in any thing contrary to his own wishes, returns so firm and decided a negative, that all further solicitation is at an end.

I think he has acquired this part of his character from studying that of Zulvago, whom, in many respects, he resembles,

particularly in the martial air of his step and carriage.

The other evening being at a party in the neighbourhood, he was requested by Maria, one of his young sisters, to join in a round game of cards, which, as he was at the time, engaged in conversation with Lord D—— and myself, he refused, and Maria left him. He was soon after attacked by a grandmother of one of the party ; who, on understanding his age, remarked, “ Although so tall, he is only a boy, and ought to join your set ; I’ll ask him myself, he cannot refuse *me*.”

She was right ; Dudley played, and with such liveliness, that he was the charm of the whole youthful party. He, however, is still, on proper occasions, the blunt Dudley. On perceiving unfair play among some of the youthful gamblers, he openly detected it ; and, notwithstanding their attempt to laugh it off, they, I fancy, secretly regretted that the old grandmother had forced him among them.

He loses and wins at cards, at chess, at backgammon, and at billiards, with equal spirit, grace, and temper. He avoids all games of hazard ; and seems to join in the above more from the necessity of conforming to the customs of society, than from any real partiality to play ; add to which, his temperance in all other respects is most admirable.

You may remark, my dear Howard, that we have been singularly happy in discovering so many excellencies in this youth, without one shade. Yes, we have found one ; and it is, also, rather of a deep nature. He is self-willed, which, at so early a period of life, is a quality neither pleasing nor safe, — a hastiness of decision, a sudden and violent prepossession for and against such and such strangers, which, you will allow, is not the best plan to get clear through the world, already marks his character. Louisa and I were making our observations on this subject before Dr. H——

the other day, when, in his way, he replied,

“ I like the young villain the better for it. What the vengeance, did you expect him to come among you with a smirk, and a bow, and a cringe, to all he should meet? No, no; give me downright, plain sincerity, and distinction of taste (with general good will, I allow); but none of your ‘ hail fellow well met’ to all the asses and calves he sees. Like you, my reverend chap, who thrust out your Windsor-soaped-clerical paw in every body’s breastwork, and shake your powdered head in all their faces, with a grin, and a bent back, and a kicked-out heel, with ‘ Baronet this,’ and ‘ my lady that,’ and ‘ my Lord Harry’—— ”

“ Stop, my dear Sir,” I said; “ is not that your *diamond-snuff-box* you are rapping so tremendously?”

“ Eh! ’tis faith;” and then looking upon it as if he had committed sacrilege, the soft blue eyes of Lady Alford meeting his, he smiled fondly upon it, saying, “ the beautiful gypsey!”

Apropos of pictures. — The day before yesterday we had a large dinner party, when, according to the invariable custom among rustic clergymen, from the Vicar of Wakefield to the Rector of Bloomfield, our *best* of all descriptions made its appearance, consequently the best drawing-room was put in company order, the covers were removed from the sofa and chairs, the curtains unbagged, and the chimney ornaments and screens unpapered. In short, — as Lady Alford once told us, we are really sometimes very thankful to our guests, for giving us an opportunity of airing our best property.

This was the first time Dudley had been in the room ; for the recollections of his sickly infancy are nearly effaced. I was standing near the chimney-piece when he came in, ready dressed and prepared for our company. After examining the Turkey carpet, which cost me a quarter of a year's tithes, he observed, glancing his eye at the length and breadth of the apartment, " A tolerable sized room this."

Upon which I rallied him upon his superb ideas, comparing the humble roof under which he was born to the stately and magnificent grandeur of Euphorbia, where he had been reared ; whilst he sauntered round the walls, to examine the pictures with which it is hung. That of mine, and his mother, gave him much pleasure ; but he was suddenly struck at the first sight of one at the further end of the room. “ There is a great likeness to Claudy in this picture,” he remarked ; “ not in the features, or the complexion, or indeed the expression. This lovely face is like her’s, — and yet it is *not*. For whom is it designed?”

“ For Lady Howard, the mother of Claudy ; and your own god-mother.”

“ Indeed !” and he looked long at it in silent admiration.

“ Step this way,” I said, “ and perhaps you can inform me for whom *this* was designed.”

He joined me ; and I pointed to your miniature of Claudy, which, with his own, have ever since decorated our drawing-room chimney-piece. He in-

stantly took it down, and gazed upon it with passion and tenderness.

“ Yes,” he said, “ I do remember this : it was painted by Sir Eliot.”

After another pause, he continued, “ Will you grant me a favour, my dear father ?”

“ Certainly, my dear son. It is the first you have asked of me since your return home ; but I hope will not be the last.”

“ This miniature,” he remarked, “ whilst it remains in this most conspicuous situation, cannot fail of attracting the attention of strangers, and giving rise to observations and indeed questions to myself that I would rather avoid. Give it to me, and it shall be concealed from general sight in my study.”

I thought the request at once reasonable, delicate, and natural ; and he was leaving the room with it, when I called him back, observing, as I took down the miniature of himself, “ This will look awkward thus left alone, and create remarks of ‘ where is its *companion* ?’ you had better take this also, and place them

together ; for when Sir Eliot sent them to me, he desired they ‘ *might never be separated.* ’ ”

The double meaning in these words of your’s, and which I now repeated so very apropos, Dudley could not fail of discovering ; but with the invincible timidity of his age, he found no words to reply. I could only perceive that his face glowed with pleasure ; and whilst he went to deposit his treasures in his own room, I fetched a couple of little landscapes to occupy the places of the departed miniatures. On the rest of my family making their appearance, I cautioned them to take no notice of this change. All passed on well ; and Dudley soon after joined us, to help us to receive our visitors.

We have just had a letter from Lady Alford, who, hearing of Dudley’s arrival in England, desires him to throw off his leading strings, and join her musical festival on the 12th of August, in honour of the Prince Regent’s birth-day, or she will give out, in her fashionable circles,

that he is “Benedict the Bachelor, *to be had.*” The Doctor has undertaken to answer her, and this is a passage in his letter :—“Do you look to your nursery, my saucy Princess, and have it in tidy order ; and your caudle, and your cake, and ‘*your sponge biscuit reduced to a pulp,*’ ready for Cavendish’s son and heir ; (her two children are, as you know, girls) and let the lad be quiet. He’ll write ‘Benedict the married man, and *not to be had,* before you leave off your most noble frolicks.”

In one part of her letter, she expresses herself very anxious to hear what profession Dudley has chosen. She *may* have heard, but she affects ignorance to exercise her whims. “Only let me know, my dear Louisa,” adds her ladyship, “that I may lend him my assistance. If the *boy* chooses to be a *doctor*, I’ll poison my guests with French dishes, merely to recommend his medical skill ; on condition though, that he pays me a visit dressed in a flowered skirted suit of clothes, and a black mantle, made out of the velvet palls of his *ci-devant* patients ;

a gold-headed cane pointed to his own pate, with ‘ nothing in that ;’ — a little muff, silver buckles, and a flowing wig ; (I have conquered my aversion to a wig, since my poor bald-pated little girl is forced to wear one.) If Doctor Dudley, thus equipped, pays me a visit, ’pon honour I’ll be ill three times a week, that he may feel my pulse with one hand, whilst I slip a three guinea fee into his other. Let him choose the *law*, and I’ll set all my tenants wrangling to load him with briefs ; and I’ll get myself and my coach-horses into fifty scrapes, for the pleasure of being led out of them by his barrister hand. If the *church*, I’ll write a sermon myself, and publish it anon, that an admiring pair of lawn sleeves may thump down his broad open hands upon the book, and swear to — No, *promise*, I mean, to give the writer (unsight unseen) a delectable living in a fine sporting country, with a clear stream of carp and tench, and a noble pack of hounds.

“ Let Dudley say he will be a *soldier*, and I’ll — no faith, I’ll have nothing

to do in *that quarter* ! But I'll tie him up black cockades, work him a gold sword-knot, and net him a crimson sash, that shall make him the coveted mark of every female unwedded eye in St. James's Street, be it black, hazel, or green. And let him choose the *sea* — why I'll become a syren among the wise lords of the admiralty, until I behold the noble jolly-boat 'The Teneriffe,' safe in the harbour of promotion."

And thus the rattling Countess runs through every profession, and indeed trade, until she ends in that of a blacksmith, when she declares, that should Dudley be a Quintin Matsys, she will order her stables and yards to be pitched with two-inch nails, as close as the floor of horses' hoofs in the grotto at Oatlands, and break the springs of all her carriages ten times a month, (at the hazard of her own bones) that he may share in the profit of repairing them.

Well, my dear Howard, I have little or nothing more to add concerning

Dudley, who is, I understand, writing to you himself. Have you heard yet from Zulvago? From my utter failure in all my endeavours to find Mrs. Shelburne, I should imagine that, if still in England, she has changed her name; but my real opinion is, that she has removed to Spain. I have written to a correspondent in that country, from whom it is likely I may hear some intelligence concerning her, which I shall not fail communicating to you. With kind remembrance to all at Euphorbia,

I am your's, most faithfully,

HENRY CLONMORE.

END OF THE FIFTH PART.

PART THE SIXTH.



LETTER XLIX.

Dudley Clonmore to Sir Eliot Howard.

Bloomfield Rectory.

WITH what lively emotions of affection and gratitude do I, for the first time in my life, write to my honoured and best friend, who has never since been absent from my thoughts, whose person seems always before my eyes, whose voice I ever seem to hear. I see you every night in my dreams. When I close my eyes in sleep, I find myself at Euphorbia; and, with all the clearness of reality, I behold you all! I am with you; I speak to you; I walk with you; I feel conscious of no change; and then I wake, and find myself in the bosom of my family. Thus is my life divided between

the places I most love. Sleeping and waking happiness are mine ; and I am most content, most happy !

My father is but little changed. His face is as good-humoured and benevolent as ever ; and his elegant person, small and well made, has worn well. But with me, the difference of looking *up* to him, and looking *down* upon him, had at first a singular effect. When we parted, I stood under his elbow, and he now only reaches to my shoulder. My mother, from frequent confinement, appears very delicate ; but her spirits are invariably cheerful. I have not yet seen any of my elder brothers ; the two younger are just come home : they are fine well-grown lads ; the one is educating at Winchester-school, and seems spirited and manly, yet with a slight degree of self-sufficiency, and indeed effrontery in his character ; but which I doubt not will in a few years wear off. The other is brought up at a school near town, consisting of about twenty boys. He is

timid, and good-natured, but evidently helpless and weak. I have offered him my services during his holidays, to conquer any difficulty in his studies, at which he expressed much grateful pleasure.

My sisters are charming girls ; ever active and employed, happy among each other, and doatingly fond of their parents. Mine is really a family of love. I like well enough to pass an hour with my sisters, when they are all together ; but it is very strange, that I cannot endure being five minutes *alone* with any one of them. I feel then as if I were with Claudy : — I look up, and find my error ! and these are moments of sadness. My sisters resemble, in person and spirits, the full and ardent glow of meridian sunshine, all glare and dazzle ; but I prefer the morning sun-beam, creating shadows, and bringing to view the striking beauties of a landscape ; and the soft beam of the evening sun, gilding and contrasting all things, — the shifting clouds, the falling showers, the trembling dew.

I have her picture, the picture of Claudy, which you sent a few years since to my father: it now, with my own, are the chief ornament of my study, — my best comfort on this side the Atlantic.

Our voyage, owing to storms and contrary winds, lasted upwards of a month. We lost sight of Teneriffe on the 15th, made Cape Finisterre on the 22d, Cape Ortegal four days after, Ushant on the 28th, and were becalmed, or blown out of our course, for the remainder of the time, off the Scilly Islands and the Lizard. “It is very fortunate,” I remarked, “that the world is at peace;” to which the Captain, with a look of meaning to his officers, observed, “No harm a prize or two, for all that.”

When within sight of England, if you just imagine something short of foundering, you will have a tolerable idea of our situation. It blew a gale from the north and the north-east the whole of the time; and during three severe squalls, we lost two tillers, three yards, our top-mast,

and sails innumerable, besides running foul of two ships of our company.

On arriving at Falmouth, at the inn to which my father had directed me, I found, on enquiry, that he had been there twice, and owing to the voyage being longer than usual, had returned home, leaving particular directions with the master of the inn, who thus expected, and accommodated me accordingly. A chaise-and-four took me to Bloomfield Rectory, Robert at my side, and Romeri on horseback behind.

The idea of again seeing my fond parents, and my native home, where my early years had been spent, filled my heart, to the exclusion of any other sentiment; and such was my agitation and restlessness, on driving up to the door, that I felt relief when informed the family were at church. It was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and having ordered my luggage into the house,

and dismissed my chaise and servants, I strolled towards the little lane between the church and parsonage, anxious not to be accosted by any one until I had seen either my father or my mother, that my first welcome might be from them.

On reaching the church-yard, I lingered long among the tombstones, when my attention was caught by the name of '*Clonmore*,' on a small black and white stone at a distance, and I stepped over the graves to examine it. I found it had been erected to the memory of one of my little brothers, who, at the age of six, had died of the measles. This brought to my recollection how near to death I had been at that very time of life, when you stretched out your fostering hands, took me, reared me in a milder climate, and made me what I am.

As the service was going on, I carefully concealed myself from sight behind an ivy-covered buttress, near the rustic porch, not daring even to indulge myself in a transient look in at the church

windows ; whilst stooping forward I endeavoured to catch the sound of the clergyman's voice, who was now reading the second lesson. At first it seemed so new to my ear, that I thought it might be a stranger who was officiating, and not my father ; but by degrees the tones became familiar to me, and it was with the softest emotion, yet with awe and respect, that I listened to his giving out the commandments.

At that moment a little terrier dog ran into the church-yard, and barked at me. He was followed by a young and fashionable party, who made towards the church door. Their attention, on entering, was divided between myself, evidently a stranger, and the dog, to whom, in vain, one of the gentlemen said, " Back, sir ! Home ! Home ! "

He persisted in attacking me ; which confusion at last brought out old George, my father's clerk, to learn what was going forward. In order to avoid being the cause of further disturbance, I thought it the wisest plan to take advantage of concealing myself, by

mingling with this party, and accompanying them into the church, and indeed into their very pew, — the owner, Lord D——, whom I did not at that time know, casting on me a look of invitation, whilst two bold young ladies of the party, by their loud whispers, made my cheeks burn; and a third, after letting fall the expressions of “foreigner,” “stranger,” “perhaps Catholic,” to a fourth, offered me a prayer-book.

I had sufficient presence of mind to place myself in such a position that I could neither be seen from the reading-desk, the pulpit, or the rector’s pew; and thus circumstanced, full at my ease, I listened with indescribable emotion to my father’s sermon. It was most admirably delivered. In substance clear, simple, and impressive; and, as inculcating the moral duties of life, was equally applicable to the inhabitant of the parish workhouse, as to the gay party of which I had, unavoidably, become a member.

Though I had been in a measure pressed into their company, when the

service was over, it plainly appeared to the rest of the congregation that I formed no part of it, by my suffering them to go away, and lingering in the aisle apparently to read the monumental inscriptions.

The church became cleared, and the moment after I was in my father's arms. Then did my separation from Euphorbia, my doubts, my regrets, completely vanish! They fled before that powerful sentiment of nature; and this, as you may suppose, was not weakened when, a few minutes after, the church door again opened, and I saw — I did not fall into my *mother's* arms, — I supported her in mine; and thus, under the sacred roof of God, in which my father and my grandfather have worshipped him, and been devoted to his service upwards of half a century, in the peculiar presence of the Almighty, was I restored to my most beloved parents.

May not moments, such as these, be called strung pearls? Some have their portion in a few scattered beads upon a nearly naked string; others have pearls

more thickly set. You, my friend, and Claudy, have been the means of enriching my store to countless numbers ; for, has not every moment spent at Euphorbia been to me a gem of the richest price ?

My elder brothers have been spending a few days with us. I like them all, particularly your name-sake Howard ; there is an openness and a frankness in his manner to me most pleasing ; and he has been kind enough to assure me, that as sisters are the most charming relations a man can be blessed with, he designs to present me *another*, in due course of time.

I see, after all, I was perfectly right in determining on having a profession. It gives a man an air of independence. It occupies his mind : and the idea of being useful to society, in some shape or other, renders him liberal-minded and happy. My brothers have the world to get through by means of their own probity, their steadiness, and active industry. Yet they do not seem to repine

at their lot, or regret that they are not born to independent fortunes. On the contrary, I really believe, were such offered to any of them, on condition they were to resign their professions, they would decidedly refuse. I know *I* should. I speak for myself. I would not accept half a million, at the expense of following the active and honourable pursuit I have chosen.

I remarked this to my father the other day ; who replied, “ Your brothers have received from me all that they will ever receive, they have each had the best of educations ; and if not generals and admirals, and bishops, and lord chancellors, it will be no fault of mine. I have done all in my power to put them in the way of attaining worldly dignities, and let their abilities and good conduct do the rest. There is no occasion to *elbow* or *fight* our way through the world ; let the two golden rules of ‘ Love God with all our might,’ and ‘ our neighbour as ourselves,’ be their guides, and they will get on with credit and honour. As for your sisters, the case is different.

whether or not they marry, my object is to secure to them for their lives, however humble, a home, an independence."

"And do you really expect to see me Lord Chancellor, my dear father?" I enquired.

"You! no, not I," he replied, with a strange kind of embarrassment in his manner.

"But you just now observed, that it is the duty of every man to endeavour to rise to the top of his calling, whatever that may be. And as I am destined for the law——"

"Yes; but when I spoke of wool-sacks," he replied, "I alluded to your youngest brother, whom I have long since apprenticed clerk to a solicitor of eminence at Exeter. Yet, believe me, Dudley, my ambition is to see him tread in the honest steps of his employer, whom, perhaps, he may succeed, and thus live and die in the place, where he has dwelt known and respected."

This, and other conversations with my father, leads me to reflect on the

great inequality between the actual situation of my brothers and my own : there is something to me painful in the conviction, that a line of difference is, to the most casual observer, drawn perpetually between us. My parents think all this is perfectly in course : my brothers, instead of questioning my rights to superior treatment, seem to rejoice at it ; and yet, I ask, by what privilege do I monopolize every advantage, where there is any doubt to whom it should belong ?

None of these things struck me for the first ten days after my arrival, but every hour now opens my eyes to the partiality bestowed on me, to the exclusion of any other branch of the family.

You remember the Rectory, my dear Sir Eliot : though I did not express my thoughts, for the first few weeks I felt so much oppressed when inhabiting my bed-room and adjoining closet, or rather study, as it is called, which I found so small, so inconvenient, and so low, that I felt quite suffocated and imprisoned : I endured that sort of irritation, the re-

sult of being confined in a close carriage ; and yet I found, on going over the house, that I was at that time occupying the most spacious and convenient apartments in it. I saw those of my parents and sisters, and I blushed at my feelings of discontent. The best drawing-room has since that time been appropriated wholly to my use, as my partial mother fondly says, she has now a living ornament to place in it ; and I breathe more freely.

Robert and Romeri continue their attendance upon me ; and yet, but for their own sakes, I could gladly dispense with their service, when I observe that even my elder brothers wait upon themselves. I took notice of this to my father, and reminded him, that if my men, or rather your's, could be of any assistance, they were expert and willing ; but he replied, " No, no, my boy ; you have been accustomed to these affairs : to you they have become indispensable, with your brothers they would be luxuries, and superfluous. By never having enjoyed carriages, riding horses,

grooms, and valets, they do not know the want. If my sons find such indispensable, let them earn them."

All these, and a thousand other minutiae, serve only to depress my mind, and make me feel a stranger at home. I wish I had come alone to England, unattended; and without the appendages of state and distinction, have landed on my native shore, and trudged on foot to the humble place of my nativity. What an ungrateful and dissatisfied fellow am I! Yet you wish to know the most secret thoughts of my heart, or I would not confess the repinings and discontent, into which I have of late been betrayed. But must it not be grating to my feelings, to see myself thus raised above my own level, higher than my parents; above, in the common phrase, my own flesh and blood. Were Claudy herself, or even you, my dear friend, on a visit at Bloomfield Rectory, I do not see that more distinction could be paid either of you, than is shown to me.

I am exclusively attended by your livery. I have received the curricule and

horses, for which you, unknown to me, gave an order in London. I am put in possession, contrary to my earnest wishes, of the best apartments of the Rectory; (and the largest is a closet, compared to the smallest drawing-room at Euphorbia;) and parties are formed in the neighbourhood for my sole pleasure and recreation. What more could be done to welcome you?

Well, I will think no more on the subject. In my next letter, I will give you an account of my reception at Oxford, and our very important proceedings in London. And have now to add, that nothing gave me more pleasure than to see once again my dear old friend Dr. H——, whose picture I have drawn whilst sleeping in his elbow-chair, with his diamond snuff-box on the table, on one side of him, and his crutch on the other. I have not yet seen Lady Alford, she is at Richmond, and near her confinement.

Tell Mr. and Mrs. Balfour, and Miss Macdonald, I have forwarded all their letters to Scotland and elsewhere; and

Mr. Turner, that some Cambridge friends of his, whom I met accidentally the other day at Lord D——'s, enquired very kindly after him. I write also to Mrs. Grantley, to whom I shall for life be most warmly attached: and now I must bid you farewell, for I have still to write to Claudy.

My guardian, my friend, I am ever, ever your affectionate and dutiful

DUDLEY CLONMORE.

LETTER L.

Dudley Clonmore to Claudina Howard.

No, Claudy, for still must I call you by that beloved name, so long endeared to us both: — no, my dearest Claudy, nor time, nor distance, nor absence, can make me forget you, as you *kindly* predicted at our last parting in the flower-garden at Euphorbia. I considered it as the last: what then was my transport, when I reached the iron gates at the foot of the hill, and looked accidentally up to the heights, as bidding a long farewell to that abode of peace and love, to see a white dress on the summit of the flag-staff hill. I discerned the figure, it was yourself; — I uttered an expression of rapture — I sprang up the acclivity, and was at your side.

But to return to what we considered a final parting in the garden. Need I ask whether you remember that hour; it is ever present to *my* mind, and we have but one mind.—After a long and fruitless search in the woods and forest, on the morning of my departure, for Rosalva had seen you walk out, I saw you—you were seated on a bench in the orange-walk—I found you pale, and in tears.

“Go,” you said to me, “go to England; it is your own wish, it has been your own proposal; go, and fulfil your desires:—return to polished life, to elegant society, to the world of fashion and gaiety, of which *we* are no longer members. Go and leave me an unadorned, disregarded person, living in obscurity, to be neglected and forgotten.”

“Forget you, Claudy! is it in my nature to forget? Yes, I may forget injuries, (should I ever receive such, for I have received none as yet,) but I can never forget what we have been to each other: living or dead, we shall still be inseparable in affection. Should I die far from you, will not my spirit fly over the At-

lantic to watch over my Claudy, to hear, to see, to love you still?"

How often, in our delightful solitary rambles, have we loved to talk of the future world, of the immortality of the soul, of the guardianship of angels. Do you remember one evening in particular, towards the end of July, about four years ago, when we had some difficulty in recollecting a passage to that purpose in the Scriptures, my running back to the house in search of one of my pocket bibles: and our sitting in the geranium alcove for nearly two hours, the arm of each round the neck of the other, seeking by the setting sun passages in Holy Writ, on which our hopes were founded: when we solemnly hoped to be the guardian angel of the survivor? Do you recollect our thoughtlessness in leaving the Bible behind us, when we both started up to chase a parrot from tree to tree, and bush to bush? — It rained heavily that night, and the sacred Book was many days

after found by one of the gardeners, damaged and totally unfit for use.

“ I deserve to be punished for my carelessness,” I remarked.

“ And I also,” you replied : “ then let us punish ourselves,” you added, “ unknown to any one,—for three days we will not meet for a private walk.”

From that period, I recollect, we were never known to leave a book out of doors.

But once more to go back to our last separation. When I found you pale and weeping, it was some time before you spoke, and silent grief alone convinced me that you regretted my departure. When I pressed you to remember your absent friend, I shall never forget the look with which you replied, reproachfully, “ Can I do otherwise than remember *you*, Dudley? can I go a step, or look at a single object in or out of the house, without having your image recalled to memory? But it will not be thus with you; you are going to new scenes, and at the same time, old and tender connections, early impressions

will be revived, and your studies engross the remainder of your attention: no share of it will be left for Euphorbia." At that instant the breakfast-bell rang; it was the summons also to bring our horses round to the door; my departure was close at hand, and I heard myself called.

"Good-by," you said, and you sat down again upon the bench where we had been seated; "good-by, Dudley, I shall remain here until you are gone."

"And it is my wish that you should," I replied; "it was my anxious desire that our parting should be witnessed by heaven alone, that the impression of our mutual farewell might be stamped upon my mind, unmixed with that of any other. Good-by, I will cherish this moment in memory."

We parted; your tears were on my cheek, when I returned slowly to the house: — ~~they~~^{yine} were your's, Claudy, for though my heart was full, I could shed none. The pressure of your hand I kept distinct in recollection from that of all other pressure; and when I turned

from you, I closed my eyes, as if to fill my imagination with your form alone.

Then, then, my Claudy, at the very moment, when in despair I was blaming my rash and precipitate folly in having formed the design of quitting Teneriffe; at the moment when I repeated, “She is lost to me! days, weeks, and months, will pass without my seeing her!” to distinguish you, like an angel indeed, far above, hovering high in air! — And when I climbed to the summit, on which stood the object dearest to me on earth, to find that object crimsoned by the blush of modesty, excusing her following us to watch the vessel in which I was to embark, your fond affectionate smile was all my own; and those tears on your dimpled cheek, dew on the bosom of the rose.

You felt the violent throbs of my heart as I pressed you to my bosom. That heart spoke in silence for me. Did it not say, “Now ask, can I forget you?” Sir Eliot’s voice was heard calling on me: “Dudley! Dudley!” echoed among the rocks; and you said, ‘would

that those rocks possessed the power of ever repeating "Dudley !" But though I should never hear the name again, it lives for ever in my heart.'

It was not until some hours after that I discovered the ring upon my finger. How or when you bestowed it, though doubtless at this last interview, I know not. But the brilliants being too costly for common show, I have fastened it on a ribbon, and take delight in wearing it unseen, and pressing it to my faithful bosom.

Oh, how mournfully did I watch the receding shores of Teneriffe ! and when far distant, gaze upon its mountains, which became gradually fainter. When at sunset, the ocean and surrounding islands being in total darkness, the summit of the Peak, illumined by the rays of the departed sun, appeared a globe of fire, I watched until that light diminished to a star, the star to a spark, and all was dark. Then, indeed, dejection came upon me : it was then that

I seemed to have lost every ray of life. That spark extinguished, my spirit sunk, and I resigned myself to the midnight indulgence of the most extreme sorrow.

The next morning we were off Madeira, the vineyards of which, gilded by the rising sun, made a truly glorious appearance; but my eyes were quickly turned away, and fixed on the south; and though every breeze that blew from thence wafted me from you, I inhaled it with pleasure, as having passed through the groves of Euphorbia.

Euphorbia! wedded to my existence by the dearest ties which memory can form! To Sir Eliot, and to Mrs. Grantley, and to others, I can write on the subject of England, of my studies, of the future; but when I write to you, my Claudy, it can only be of the past. Your image lives in my mind. Every word, and look, and action of your's, as marking an avowed preference for myself, is treasured there; and from among these hidden stores, I seek to cheer my hours

of solitude, — to teach me to bear our separation.

When I look back to the ten years of perfect and unalloyed happiness I have been blessed with you at Euphorbia; when I compare what I am, to what I might have been! — I was once a weak and puny child, the victim of disease and infirmity: and what am I now! I blush, with gratitude to Heaven, and your father, when I think of that. How many moments of pure and exquisite bliss, my dear and innocent Claudy, have I shared with you? The first on recollection occurred when we were in our eighth year. I was one evening throwing stones, to knock down oranges; you were on the terrace at a distance. Presently I heard you, after a gentle cry, and staggering a few steps back, call to me, “Dudley, don’t throw stones, it is dangerous play;” and you turned and ran into the house. Although wholly ignorant of the mischief my unlucky hand had caused, I left off that play, and turned to some other amusement.

The next day, Sir Eliot remarked that your hair was in your eyes, and desired you to part it. You blushed, and looked silly : upon which he caught you by the arm, and divided himself your beautiful ringlets, when we saw on your forehead a large swelling, of a dark purple colour. I felt sorry for the accident, without the smallest idea that I had caused it ; and, whilst vinegar and brown paper were applied, I joined Sir Eliot, and your aunt, in questioning you how it had happened. — In vain ; you were silent : — blushes, and downcast looks, your only answer. The truth came across me ; and I still remember the fond emotion of affection and gratitude I felt at your courage and generosity, (child as you were,) and I called out, “ I did it ! I’m sure I did it ! I know I did.” Do you recollect my kissing your forehead ; and your putting your arms round my neck, saying, “ Don’t cry, little Dudley ; you did not intend to hurt me. It was an accident, papa ;” proudly adding, “ and I desire no more may be said about it.”

‘Had the blow been on the temple,’ Sir Eliot remarked, ‘or half an inch lower, it might have been fatal, or attended with the loss of an eye.’ From that day I never threw stones; and from that hour may be dated, in my bosom, the birth of tenderness, as you some time after yourself remarked, by saying, “My dear little Dudley, I’m not sorry you threw the stone at me; for I find you have loved me since that accident much more than you did before.”

Our next moment of happiness, was when I climbed over the iron inclosure to share your solitary confinement. By dint of argument having convinced you you were in the wrong in your dispute with Nurse Morton, you remarked, “I think, Dudley, you are the best little boy I ever knew;” (this, to confess the truth, being no great compliment, as you were acquainted with no other;) “and I will give you —— stay, where are my scissors?” and you took out your pocket-book. “I will give you, Dudley, one

of these pretty curls off my forehead, which you have often asked me for ; but I thought it a pity to spoil my hair ; and you may put it in the brooch Mrs. Balfour gave you, and wear it when you grow a man, like papa.”

Claudy, to this hour I wear that brooch and hair ; and when you gave it me, you added, “ There, take that ; because you have been a friend to me, in this my very great distress.”

And then the subject of the only disagreement we ever had, the Andalusian ponies, when I would make no allowances for your childish thoughtlessness, and was deaf to your justification, although I ought to have remembered, that you had never, in thought or word, deceived me, or indeed any other person on earth. Well might your indignation be excited at my ungenerous disregard to your assertions of the truth. *You* may forget your expressions on that occasion ; but they live in my memory : — “ Well, Dudley, from this day, all the management of my ponies, and my little mules, and my curricie, and harness,

and saddles, I give to you ; for you boys understand those affairs ; and I will have no more conversations with the grooms and stable-men about them. But I do desire, *sir*, that when I assert a thing, it may be believed, no matter how absurd or ignorant it may make me appear ; that is my concern. All your duty is, to give me full credit for what I say ; for why should I not speak truth ? Who, or what have I to fear, on this earth ? If you ever doubt my word again, my love for you will cease.”

“ Then you do love me now ? ” I enquired, as I took a peach from your hand, and we rose together to walk in the forest.

“ Do I ! ” you replied ; “ excepting papa, and aunt Grantley, I love you, Dudley, better than the whole world put together.”

I would never wish, Claudy, that that exception may be omitted. Let me fill the third place in your heart, and I shall be content.—Should you lose your father, or your aunt, I must occupy the second place ; and if no longer a

daughter, or a niece, Claudy, may I hope to be to you, all in all?

Adieu, dearest, most beloved! Remember to nurse, and water, and cherish that moss-rose bush, which we planted at the same moment of time, with our hands entwined together round the stem, near the flowering tulip tree, in the myrtle grove. When it puts forth buds, send me word. When it blooms, send me the leaves in your letter; and be sure to have it fenced round, and with care, or our antelopes and parrots will destroy it. I shall feel much sorrow, believe me, should that shrub of love decay, through neglect or accident. Look to it, Claudy. My own precious, Claudy look to it, as you value the peace of your faithful friend.

LETTER LI.

Mrs. Grantley to Mrs. Clonmore.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Euphorbia, Teneriffe.

MR. Clonmore's letter relative to his son, has given me, as well as my brother, the sincerest satisfaction, though no surprise, convinced, as we were, that in Dudley you would meet with no disappointment. His education is solid, and moral ; and such is the spirit of activity which permits him not to waste the slightest portion of time, that, we are well aware, whatever may be his future situation in life, he will constitute, in himself, his own happiness. But as Eliot, I understand, is writing to Mr. Clonmore fully on this subject, suffer me to confine myself to an account of how my niece bore this first trial of her good sense and fortitude.

My brother having accompanied our dear Dudley to the vessel in which he was to embark, I was left alone, Claudy not making her appearance the whole of that morning. As I well knew the mind I had to deal with, and was convinced she would not indulge much longer in unnecessary lamentation; but, on the contrary, conquer her sorrow, as soon as she could, I did not seek her, or cause her to be sought. My brother returned to dinner, and she had not appeared. As we had no company, her absence was of no material consequence, and Mr. Turner being at Ben Lomond, Eliot and I dined alone. On our retiring to the small library, on the other side of the house, we saw her white dress through the windows, among the trees, and she soon after joined us, when Eliot, still continuing his conversation with me, held out his arm, and enfolded her, as she sat by his side, hiding her tears on his shoulder.

“Is the wind fair?” I asked.

“Perfectly, at present,” he replied;
“if it keeps in this quarter, they will

have passed Madeira by to-morrow night; once they shall have weathered the Bay of Biscay, I shall have no apprehensions."

"Apprehensions!" said Claudy, looking up, "have you any?"

"Yes, my love; the sea is at all times uncertain; and we touch the Equinox."

"I hope Dudley may arrive safe in England."

"I hope and trust in God he may," said her father.

And the very idea of Dudley's being exposed to peril, made her forget her own personal grief in the loss of his society. Such, I apprehend to be ever the nature of true love; the object of affection is preferred, in all cases, and at all hazards, to merely self. "We are now only parted for a time," she argued aloud; "should he be lost, and we parted for ever!—No I will hope for the best." Thus, the apprehension of a greater evil banished the lesser, and she began to revive.

The evening passed in idleness on the part of both the father and the daughter; for whilst I sat at work, they seemed

watching my industrious fingers as they talked at intervals with each other. Though various subjects were started on both sides, they all ended in that of Dudley's voyage.

The next morning, when Claudy and I met in our own drawing-room, I could not fail remarking the state in which she had evidently passed the night; her pale cheek and swollen eyes convinced me she had not slept. Without taking notice of her appearance, I observed, as she was gathering some scattered drawings, and placing them in a portfolio, "I fear that Dudley's loss will be most severely felt by your father; he is so fondly attached to him, so greatly accustomed to his society. For the last ten years, Claudy, as you well know, they have been inseparable: in their studies, their walks, their rides, they have been ever together. In losing Dudley, he seems to have lost his only son, and has no one now to whom he can communicate his thoughts without reserve (ourselves excepted). He

has suffered so much in early life from the loss of your mother, that I dread a recurrence of his dejection:—your's cannot fail of increasing his; and thus, instead of being of mutual comfort, you will be the reverse to each other.

A new light seemed to break in upon her, and, as I expected, *self* was immediately forgotten, and all her anxiety turned upon her father. From wearing the appearance of pensive languor and negligence, she suddenly recovered herself, exerted every energy of her naturally strong mind, and began to see the necessity in this, her first trial in life, of putting in practice the lessons which hitherto had been her study.

She left me, and passed quickly to her own room; from whence, in about half an hour, she again came, her dress better arranged, her hair in perfect order, and her face wearing a smile. She hurried me down to breakfast: on entering the room I saw my brother already seated at the table, but with a look, and in the posture of the deepest dejection, an attitude and countenance I had not seen for

many years, and I felt the most sincere sorrow. Claudy was behind me, attentively observing her father, and as if held back by respect from obtruding upon his grief.—“ Jane,” he said, “ I see you blame me, but I cannot help it—this boy fills my thoughts : I *did* hope—I must confess it was the first hope of my existence — that he would never have quitted Euphorbia, except upon an occasional visit of a few weeks to see his family ; but this profession,—the new connections that he must unavoidably form, his own unbounded ardour in the pursuit of knowledge, this sort of mania that possesses him, of seizing what is advanced by any person, regardless whether suiting his own situation or not, and with headstrong obstinacy following that, and that alone :—in short, all the favourable impressions under which I viewed this law-scheme fade away, before the bitter chance of losing him.—Some officious friend or other may put it into his head to remain in England, and follow this vocation, as he calls it, and sicken him of ever returning to Teneriffe :—and

should his coming to us again not be voluntary — ”

My brother was here interrupted by his daughter, who, leaning over his shoulder, said, “ You unkind papa, thus to wrong our dear Dudley.—I am convinced he will return, and of his own accord ; for I know that his heart is here.” Her smile and look of consolation seemed at once to revive him ; and as he turned to the breakfast-table, and began his meal, he replied, “ Well, Claudy, if Dudley has left his heart in your keeping, I am content ; we may then expect to see him as certain as the carrier-pigeon flying back to its nest.”

Claudy blushed and was silent ; when he continued, anxious, as it appeared, to reward her self-command by assuming an appearance of cheerfulness, and which, in a short time, became unfeigned — “ So, now that you have given me fresh hope and life of our young Templar’s return, we will set about the arrangements for his new *chambers*, that they may be ready for him on his return next August twelvemonth.”

Thus did Claudy reap the reward of her fortitude and filial affection. After breakfast she accompanied her father to the rooms in question, leaving me to my usual morning household avocations ; since which time they have been almost constantly together ; and by their kind endeavours to keep up the spirits of each, are of the greatest advantage towards ensuring their own peace and cheerfulness of mind. Claudy has completed six of the set of drawings which are to ornament the walls of one of Dudley's rooms ; and my brother, as I understand, is engaged in a still more important undertaking :—he has already finished a whole-length likeness of himself, and one of Claudy, about three feet by two feet five ; and, as it appears, I am designed to furnish a subject for the third picture. I consented to their joint request, on condition that my tambour-frame might be admitted, when Claudy remarked, “ without that, however like, it could not resemble Aunt Grantley.”

Letters are arrived from England.—When the mail-bag was placed in my brother's hand, Claudy let fall her work on the ground, abruptly started from her chair, and quitted the room. Eliot having given me my letters and opened those to himself, took out an inclosed one, and glancing at the direction, held it over his shoulder, expecting it to be taken out of his hand ; when, disappointed, he turned, and looked up and round the room. “Where's Claudy ? it is a letter to her from Dudley :—what made the child run away at such a moment ?” Her running away, my dear Mrs. Clonmore, proved her to be no longer a child. I laid my own letters on the table, and took that which Eliot still held, saying, “I will take it to Claudy myself.”

“Yes,” replied my brother, “if you can find her ; she may be at this moment half a mile off, at the flag-staff. I suppose he made her promise to read his first billet doux on the spot where they last parted.”

I judged otherwise, and went immediately to her bible-closet, at the door of

which I tapped gently, calling to her by name. — “ Yes, Aunt,” was the reply : and as I held the door a-jar, and put in the letter, I felt it snatched from my hand, as if from the sudden impulse of emotion ; closing the door carefully, I returned to the room below.

In about three hours afterwards, Claudy sprang into the room, and in the arms of her fond father hid her tears and blushing joy.— I left them together ; and when we again met, saw in both the most perfect and unconcealed pleasure. Claudy, it appears, had offered her letter to Eliot’s perusal, but with a kiss he declined looking at it, saying, such was his reliance on the excellent principles of both his children, that he should consider their correspondence as sacred. When so good an understanding subsists between parent and child, nothing can go amiss.

I felt gratified, and yet not disappointed, when Claudy offered Dudley’s letter to me to read ; but I also refused to see it, not in imitation of the example set by her father, but under the full per-

suasion that connected as these children (as we still call them) are at present, and will be in a few years, the more they are left to the direction of their own innocent hearts, the better chance of the most unbounded reliance and confidence in each other hereafter. Were my brother's intentions contrary to what they are, we should of course act differently ; but the constant intercourse of Dudley and our niece being now ripened into confirmed attachment, we have only to hope that no change will take place in *his* affections, (and daily experience proves that men are more fickle than women;) for I am certain that those of Claudy, even at this tender age, are fixed, and for the remainder of her life : they could not have rested on a more excellent object, and I hope yet he will prove a blessing to herself and father.

Within the last six months my niece has greatly improved in person : she has shot up in height, and without being less healthy, is, in outward appearance, much

more delicate. — Her manners are softer, and carry with them a greater portion of feminine grace, than her robust and independent childhood promised; her voice is better modulated, her tone less decisive; and though still light and active, she is less eager, swift, and turbulent than she was only a twelvemonth since. Obstinacy, violence, and selfishness, which were the prominent faults of her early years, have gradually disappeared, and chiefly owing to her endeavours to amend herself on the one holy and only perfect model. The Scriptures continue her daily study, and by them is her conduct, even to the slightest variation of temper, regulated. The Gospels are her law, her guide, her constant rule of right.

Whilst her chief aim is to study the comfort and happiness of those who live under the same roof with her, and be on the most amicable footing with her friends and neighbours, she endeavours to extend her general bounty to all who may stand in need of it. With the education of the infant poor we cannot of

course in a Catholic country interfere, as otherwise we might; but on those points in which the article of faith is not a question, such as hunger and want, Claudy affords her assistance, and in the cities and their neighbourhood extends the never-exhausted hand of charity. Her present munificent allowance and future expectations authorise her to be the agent of Heaven; and she fulfils her duties with simplicity, and yet with unbounded liberality.

Mr. Turner, I must own, did not seem to regret Dudley's society as much as I thought he would; and I felt hurt and surprised at this apparent want of affection, when I learned the cause from my brother; he then had my pardon, as we must allow that a first passion absorbs every other feeling. September is fixed for his marriage with Miss Macdonald, when he quits Euphorbia for a house at Santa Cruz, which has been purchased for the young couple by my brother, and furnished by Mr. Balfour.

The latter and his wife were much pleased to hear such very gratifying ac-

counts of their favourite, Lady Alford, and desired me, when I wrote to Caroline, to congratulate her and Captain Cavenish on their little son and heir. Mrs. Balfour has expressed surprise and disappointment, that my sister has never written to her but three times since she quitted Teneriffe: perhaps you would have the goodness to mention this to Caroline, when you see or write to her. Herself I consider the best judge, whether or not she ought, considering circumstances, to keep up a correspondence with Mrs. Balfour, to whom my brother and I continue still very partial.

With respect to myself, my dear Mrs. Clonmore, Dudley, I have no doubt, has given you some account of me, with the rest of the inhabitants of Euphorbia; and I have little to add, except to own that, at times, regret *will* find its way into my heart. I look on Dudley and Claudy, and say, “Had my children lived, they might have been like these — such might have been my Edward and my darling Mary!” But I as hastily sup-

press every murmur, and add, "The Lord hath taken his own." The blessing of that Supreme Being be ever with you and your's.

JANE GRANTLEY.

LETTER LII.

Claudina Howard to Dudley Clonmore.

Euphorbia, Teneriffe.

MY own dear friend! Yes, I *did* read your letter in the very spot you wished I should — my bible-closet. Before I opened it, on my knees, with burning tears of gratitude, I thanked the Almighty Preserver of your life, I blessed him for having guarded you through the perils of the seas, and conducted you in safety to your home. — Your home, Dudley! this, this is your home, that your paternal home shared with many; this your adopted, shared with — my father.

Remember, remember that it was only on a visit for which you left us; that by the time our roses have blown for the second time, we shall look for your return. Yes, I shall watch with jealous care the beautiful moss-rose tree we together

planted ; and yet, with all my vigilance and affectionate anxiety, it may droop, and show symptoms of decay. It is, as you observe, the talisman of the heart. Should it, through sympathy for your defection, wither before even it can arrive at maturity, can you hope to receive the tribute of its leaves, fragrant as the breath of love ? No, no, Dudley ; if it bear, nor bud, nor bloom, but thorns alone, expect those thorns. And yet, my friend, should you even forget me, I will not, for I cannot reproach you ; I have learned, for the last ten years, the lesson of kindness ; and that of reproach will be new indeed to me !

I read your letter ; it was a moment of bliss, which, I am convinced, can find no parallel : your *first* letter to me. I was alone, beyond the chance of intrusion, and yet I turned the key of my door. I was alone, and yet I blushed as I held it in my hand. I spun out my happiness with artful delicacy — I spun it out — I delayed reading it. I—— Oh,

Dudley ! I am ashamed to confess the follies I committed previous even to examining the contents. Did I not already know what it contained ? — I did. — Had I attempted to write your sentiments, without having seen your letter, such would they have been ; we have, therefore, it appears, one mind ; *you* might, perhaps, echo, one heart.

I can say with truth, that your presence never gave me one half of the pure and unmixed delight afforded by this your letter : and could I have had the slightest idea that from absence itself can be extracted the most sublime and rapturous emotions ! — pardon me, Dudley, but, indeed, the sight of you never gave me such joy as have these written testimonies of your tenderness, your constancy. That hour was delirium ; I was giddy with excess of joy ; and having read it, and pondered over every word, and studied every sentence, I quitted my retreat, and felt as if I no longer touched the ground.

I know not why, but I felt reluctant to be seen by any person whomsoever ;

and yet, why should I feel ashamed of having heard from you, my friend?—and yet I was. I did not return to my father and aunt, but I went to my garden ; and as if my steps were invisibly guided, I found myself standing by our rose tree. I shall write to him to-morrow, I said, but I have no rose leaves to send as yet : the buds are barely formed, and it would be wanton cruelty to tear open these thus early, and thereby destroy all future promise. — No, I'll let them blow : patience, and sun, and rain, and fostering care, will bring this tree to maturity, when Dudley, with me, shall share the produce, rose for rose.

Whither did I go next?—to the orange-walk, and I sat down upon *that* bench ; and though you were no longer beside me, I scarcely regretted you ; for had you not departed, I should have had no letter once more to read, and read again. I smiled, and almost told the trees under which I sat, and the clustering jasmine around me, and the canopy

of hanging passion-flowers — they, you may remember, had all witnessed our parting, — I had nearly spoken to them, and said, “ He has written to me.”

But oh, Dudley, when from thence I walked — walked ! when I glided swiftly, yet gently, as if endowed with the power of flight, and reached the high summit of the flag-staff hill ! the boundless prospect stretched before me of mountains, valleys, rocks, waterfalls, and sea ! I seemed to stand alone in the wide creation, — no human being was in sight : this was the narrow velvet spot of ground, scarcely able to hold more than two persons at a time, whereon we had stood, as if it were designed for one affectionate pair alone, to meet unseen by every mortal eye, here to exchange at parting promises of eternal remembrance.

I went over the scene in imagination ; I saw you in my mind, winding down through the vineyards by the side of my father, and reaching the boundary of Euphorbia ; I caught again your mournful air, your glance at hazard to the

heights ; I heard your exclamation ; I saw you succeed in your bold and daring attempt to reach me by almost a perpendicular ascent. And again, in idea, I felt you near me ; I repeated your words, and my own, (for I have our dialogue by heart, not a word missing or extraneous ;) the hills took pleasure in echoing the name of “ Dudley,” and you vanished from my sight — the name died away on my ear, and I closed my eyes.

Still the vessel was in sight : with respect to it, I marked a distant fixed object, to notice the very instant when it should stir, — and all was motionless. I saw the boat put off the shore, and could distinguish the dark figures against the light blue sea ; it reached the vessel ; my eyes were strained with gazing : at length, — the despair of that moment surely can never be forgotten ! — I saw the boat return — I saw the vessel move ! it passed the fixed object I had for that purpose marked, and I saw no more.

Dearest Dudley, and you found, then, your father and your mother well; and in health and spirits? Do they ever talk to you of *little* Claudy?—I hope they do: tell them, from me, to bestow every epithet they please upon the infant tyrant, whom they must remember: so that they talk to you daily of me, it is all I ask.

My father fell into despondency on your departure, and, for the first time in my life, I spent a sleepless night. I endeavoured to close my eyes, when my room, in imagination, appeared the cabin of a ship. Nay, do not jest at what I say—I heard the splashing of the waves on all sides, and the loud trampling of feet over head. A few nights afterwards, I suffered still more, and was in storms and danger; the sea appeared to burst over me, the masts to fall with a tremendous crash; I heard the loud voices of men; I felt appalled; I shrieked “Oh, Dudley, save me!” I awoke, and found myself in the arms of the terrified Rosalva.

You make no mention of the particulars of your voyage, my friend, in your letter to me, and my father has taken no notice of the contents of your's. Why not have told me whether it was attended with danger or not? We have had no storms in our seas since your departure, and the wind has been fair; do, then, dreams really go by contraries; and was your voyage as quick and as prosperous, as affection itself could wish?

None of your sisters, you say, remind you of me; in that I rejoice: I would be solitary in your imagination, and valued for myself alone. I should not feel happy, were you ever to inform me that you had found another Claudy. The world may possess—nay, does—many of superior intellects, of more refined accomplishments, of exquisite grace in features and in form; but, believe me, Dudley, you will find but one Claudy on earth: the whole of my sex may surpass me in learning and in beauty, but none can in truth and fidelity.

My father's spirits are better than they were ; and how I wish to raise your jealousy, by assuring you I have succeeded to your place in his library. I occupy your chair at his writing-table ; I arrange my books and papers in the same order as you were accustomed to do ; I endeavour to smile upon him as you used to smile, and to look your looks ; but, though I strive to give him all my attention, when either reading or writing with him, in Spanish, or French, or Italian, he finds the difference ; — my abilities are so very inferior to those of his last pupil ; my intellectual acquirements so childish, compared to your's : and often, though I endeavour to check this truly feminine habit, I am in so great a hurry to begin my study and come to a conclusion, that the progress is but little attended to.

The other day he observed this, and drew a comparison at the instant between your attention, docility, and patience, and mine. “ Study, with you, I

perceive, Claudy," he said, "is often a rapid drive; whilst, with Dudley, it is a steady, sober walk, capable of admitting of reflection: if at the end of your ride, you are asked what you remarked on your way, the answer must undoubtedly be, 'I do not know; all I know is, that I *was there*, and *am here*;' whereas Dudley, if questioned and cross-questioned, can recall the particulars of his route; he can describe the different places at which he stopped to admire any local beauty; he gathers wild nosegays and purchases cultivated flowers, and these he hereafter produces to gratify himself and others; he has perhaps caught the reflection of himself in a clear lake; and thus, when he arrives at the end of his career, his experience is improved, and his knowledge expanded. You, on the contrary, dash on in a full rapid flight through the road of science, and arrive at the end of the journey, enveloped in a cloud of dust. Such, Claudy, is a picture of the *judicious* and the *thoughtless* reader."

It has become my employment to fill the glasses and vases throughout the lower apartments with flowers ; and these, Dudley, I gather from *your* garden ; they are all of your own culture. My garden is now neglected ; but I have myself superintended your's. Would that you could repay me in kind, my Dudley !

The morning after your departure, I went to the rooms you had occupied for the last ten years, expecting to see them despoiled of all your little property. — How great then my surprise, to find that not the slightest change had taken place : here were still your books, your maps, your writing-desk ; the painting materials, the telescope, the spy-glass, and microscope ; your mathematical instruments, your foils, and even your dressing-case, all are left behind : and, what perhaps gave me more pleasure than all, was to observe your fur-cap, your riding-gloves, and whip on the sofa, where, most probably, you had thrown them on your

return from our last drive in the South valley.

At first, this unexpected appearance gave me pleasure, and, shortly after, pain. Here, I remarked, is the gilded cage; the full trough of seed; the porcelain bath; the shining glasses of water: — but the bird is gone! and what sight more melancholy (comparatively speaking) than that of a cage, when our favourite bird is dead or flown.

I mentioned the appearance of your room to my father, when I perceived he looked confused and perplexed: the sudden flush of his cheek convinced me of my imprudence; and I would have changed the subject, when he observed with a faint smile, as if his conduct required some apology — “ The truth is, Claudy, that I am in doubt, whether I could not have spared *you* on a trip to England, rather than Dudley. I seek to deceive myself, and, by my desire, his room has been left in the state you have seen; at my wish, he took with him only a solitary portmanteau, and a sea-chest,

containing a sufficient stock of linen, a change of clothes, and a small spy-glass; and, for amusement, Waverley and Guy Mannering; for thousands, I would not have had his rooms stripped of all these trifles, which cheat me into the idea that they wear the appearance as if he was gone on a ride to Ben Lomond, or a morning's excursion."—Need you any further conviction of the value in which you are held by this best of fathers?

And now, my dearest Dudley, that I have tried to convince you of the hold you have on all our affections, grant me the privilege of friendship, and let me reprove you. In your letter to me, you were so wholly engrossed by recollections of the days of our childhood, that the present hour and occupation was overlooked. — I must also come in for my share of blame, whereby I confess to have read your letter, at least, ten times, before I remarked your errors of neglect. Your letter is neither dated, signed, nor sealed; I can only give a guess as to the day on which it was written; I am at no loss certainly to know from whence,

or from whom it comes ; and the sealing was of little consequence, as it was enclosed in one to my father ; but, as he remarked on my mentioning these sins of omission to him, it was rather, you must allow, an unlucky *début* in public life ; and that such in the literary line might be awkward, and, perhaps, productive of evil or fatal consequences in the legal and mercantile world.

Well, my friend, have I more to add ? need I press upon your recollection, that in losing you, though only for a short period — short ! the last month has appeared the first lingering period of my existence — that each has lost in you another self ? You did not *sign yourself*, my friend, dear Dudley ; but, in the very omission, I found a charm, — it owed its origin to the hurried feelings of the moment ; mine are more calm :— what then would be *my* excuse, did I wilfully neglect to sign *myself* your constant,

Your affectionate

CLAUDY HOWARD.

LETTER LIII.

The Countess of Alford to Mrs. Balfour.

Park Place.

AND so, my dear Mrs. Balfour, I hear from Jane you are unreasonable enough to quarrel with me for having written to you only three times since my departure from Teneriffe — at least Mrs. Clonmore thus writes me word, and presumes to rail at my ill-behaviour. My husband might as well find fault with me for supplying him with only a leash of children during the last six or seven years. Recollect, my dear madam, that when at Teneriffe, having no family of my own, I was glad to load the broad and flagging wings of old Time with fanciful long epistles, to bear to my correspondents : but now that the case is altered, and that the said venerable gentleman, with one single lock on his foretop, is deceased, and that from his ashes have

sprung the smiling *Hours*, whose light and playful pinions, who could have the cruelty to encumber with any thing weightier than a note of enquiry, or a card of invitation?

Lord! I'm getting very ridiculous: it took me five minutes to wind round that simile or metaphor, or whatever you may call it. Well then, in plain English, (you understand *that*, Canarian Balfour, if not, ask your bra' Caledonian,) I must leave off scribbling, and attend to my family. I must chase the sulks from the face of my nautical spouse; look to the keys of good housewifery; whip all my children round, and kiss and put them to bed.

Some advantage, after all, in these *late* marriages! Had I been honoured with a brat or two by my late lord, or had soon got tired of my liberty, I might, in the course of nature, be by this time a granny! Heaven bless me! what a word! — a granny! But having wisely enjoyed full ten years of sterile widowhood, here

am I at — our family Bible *does* certainly say eight-and-thirty ; but my most admirable looking-glass, and my *mirror* of a husband, and my kind *reflecting* guests, all declare that *I cannot possibly be five-and-twenty*.

All I know is, that these little striplings beside me are my lawfully begotten children ; whereas they might, in point of years, add the word *grand* to their title. I am now seated, or was about two minutes since, between a couple of young ladies, my daughters, four and five years of age, whilst on my knee was perched a little Neptune of three months old, not looking at my bewitching face, — no, trust him for that, what would he get there ? — but at my fair neck (alias bosom), with both his fists raised, as if he intended to treat like a kettle-drum the reservoirs of his daily food, whilst roaring with the voice of a boatswain, “ Give me my dinner, mammy ; ” that is, if he could speak. The little villain ! — only think of his coming into the world merely to baulk my intended festival at Richmond, in honour

of the Regent's birth-day, — the deuce take him. Nay, he had the impudence to be born on that very royal morning, as if to vow and protest that *his* birth should be also celebrated by the ringing of bells, the flying of flags, by trumpets, blackamoors, and tambourines. I had a great mind, the moment he was born, to take him by the two shoulders, and give him such a shake, that should frighten him out of the world again.

Well, hush-a-by, darling mine ! there, it is at last satisfied. Here nurse, take him, — away with him : — there ! be off to sleep with you. And you girls get along both into the Park with your nurses, governesses, and tutors, or, by the black powers of necromancy, I'll transport you, with a touch of the *rod*, to Teneriffe, and sister Jenny. Nay, if you're saucy, you pair of impudent little mermaids, I'll send you to Donna Balfour at once, and she'll soon cram you to death with sugar-plums.

Well, enough said of the brats, — a word or two of papa. A first-rate husband after all, short as he is. Did I ever think that I should marry again in the way that I have ! Would you believe it, my capital friend, this Triton, this Cavendish, in person and qualities, is the very opposite to all I ever thought indispensable in my choice of a second. In the first place, he is no taller than myself ; but *you* have seen him ; and, I assure you, he is no better in that respect. Then he is so fair, that, although I know him to be a *post*, and a *commander*, he looks at all events so like a fresh-water sailor, I am greatly tempted, some night in his sleep, to give his face a wash over with brown paint, or a gentle scrubbing with walnut-shucks. As for gunpowder, I don't think, though the gazettes did blazon forth his gallantry, he ever stood much in the way of that ; for no beauty-scar is to be seen on his warlike (that is, lady-like) brow ; and instead of the seams of wounds, made by an enemy's cutlass, my captain has the folly and impudence to sport, on his fine face, as bewitching

a pair of dimples as ever a lady of *ton* would covet, — to clap on her's. Now what, say I, has a sailor to do with dimples at all? except, as I observed, he should spy them in the cheeks of a pretty girl.

Then I used to like grave, solemn, silent, and stalking men, (the heavy horse of society,) whereas this light skirmisher, this little *blue and white* beau of mine, with his enormous gold epaulettes, and his medal of K. C. B., is ever on the broad smile of good-humour. I'm "*Carry, my love,*" and "*Carry, my dear,*" at every moment; and he looks upon his children as if he were a sportive dolphin, enticing them to have a ride upon his back.

Well, upon the whole, I find that these little, slender, smiling men make the best husbands; they are so cosey and so domestic, and they draw their chairs so close to the fire, and so rub their hands, and feeling happy in themselves, are happy with all around them; and, in a walk, they are indisputably to be preferred. When hanging on the arm of a

great tall fellow, he never hears what you say to him, nor do you understand all the fine things he says in return — they are lost *in air* : for either he has to stoop to you, or you to stretch up a long neck to him ; and this breaks the thread of conversation. Whereas you and Balfour, I and Cavendish, are most wonderfully well matched in this respect, (and, to tell the truth, in every other.) When walking side by side, we are on a par ; a regular communication of ideas and observations can go on ; when I turn round to speak to Cavendish, (I, being tall, am on a level with my *man-of-war*,) our eyes meet, we can watch each other's countenance ; I speak to a *face*. But faith, in walking with some men of my acquaintance, Charley Maxwell for example, (Irish giant the second,) I seem speaking to his elbow, at best to the lapelle, or the collar of his coat. Then, add to this, little men try to make the most of themselves, and rise as they walk, whereas tall men often contract a stoop. Little men are active, tall men sluggish ; little men —

The deuce - take little men, and all men, I say ! *Tafferil* Cavendish had the audacity to bounce into my dressing-room just now, like a Congreve rocket, to set me on fire — with passion. He dare to interfere in my intended arrangements ! Next Thursday — six weeks, I purposed opening our Richmond villa for the season to the world, (and its wife, if she would come,) with a ball and supper, and here he has, positively he has, altered the date to that of a month later ! This is not to be borne ;— and his excuse ! fears of my health, and the fatigue, and the crowd, and the late hours ! Nonsense. I protest, I'll get all my friends to send him a Round Robin of abuse for his ill-behaviour.

Lord ! my dear ma'am, the designed hero of the *fête*, Dudley Clonmore, (I have not seen him yet,) will be off to Oxford by that time, where his college tutors intend, I find, to keep him strict to his terms.

The deuce a bit, were I Dudley, if I would be governed by old walking pictures of proctors, and doctors, and masters, and fellows, and such sort of stuff. And if *I* must obey naval orders, and have my ball on the night chosen by Captain Cavendish, huff and bluff, should Dudley not be inspired with the proper *University* spirit, to give them all the slip, and come to us gay ones at Richmond, he is not worth one single powdered hair in the graceful wig of old Mrs. Ellen Law: he is not, by the judicial eloquence of *Adolphus Alley*, Esq. and Messrs. Robin Hood, Scarlett, and Little John, with the fair Clorinda to-boot.

I have seen him! I have seen this *fieri* and *superbe* young Guanche! This prince of Teneriffe! This most exquisite lad of the Fortunate Isles! The adopted of Eliot, and the chosen *dearly beloved* of Claudy. I have seen him at last; him who quitted England as squalid and diminutive as an Indian pagod, and who is

returned, expanded and lofty as a Persian satrap !

He called about an hour ago. I was out. On my return, glancing at the hundred and ten cards which covered the table in the hall, I distinguished that of " Mr. Dudley Clonmore." I believe I shrieked ; at any rate, I turned back, sprung into my carriage, just as James was drawing up the blinds, and crying out, " To Dr. H——'s, Cavendish-square," rattled off with the thundering noise of a fire-engine.

I alighted, and tripped — (no wicked interpretation, I beg) — tripped up stairs, and there — defend me ! when I expected to find the physician that is, and the counsellor that is to be, poring over green bags and folios, comparing *cases*, reading *reports*, and unrolling parchments, talking of briefs, *fees*, bones and skeletons, with a pen stuck behind each ear, — they were — yes, faith, they *were* rattling the bones, but they were those of a dice-box. There, at a backgammon-table, with a bottle of port, and one of

Madeira at their elbow, sat lounging away the after-dinner hour, in a snug back drawing-room, our M. D. and his gout, and our blooming student of jurisprudence.

“Hoy, hoy, my Princess!” cried the old beau, with a shining skin full of joy, holding out to me both his hands, and one of his feet also, for the matter of that; for, wrapped in flannel, it lay upon a chair. Then with a brimfull eye, and a leer of pleasure, he added, jerking his head and turned-back thumb to a noble and graceful figure, who, on my entrance, rose hastily, and leaned on the back of his chair, “There he is — look at him. Pity you did not wait a few years longer. There’s a fellow for you; — can you match him in England?”

In the mean time, my dear friend, this fine creature stood smiling at me with a bright blush upon his downy cheek; and I, having taken the seat he had placed for me, sat — like the enchanted lady in Comus. No; this I was not prepared for. I had heard he

was tall and pretty ; and I expected to see a high, lanky, aukward — not aukward, but sheepish — in short, a mawkish younker, neither the bold and daring boy, nor the assured man ; but here was finished excellence in youth.

“ Why don’t you give her pretty ladyship a kiss, you dog ? She has often kissed you. One good turn deserves another ;” said our elegant Hippocrates.

When I replied, “ Oh no, Mr. Dudley has no *salutes* to give away ; besides, it is a contraband article in this country : it is the growth of Teneriffè ; and my niece Claudy now has alone a right to such valuables ;” and I held out my hand to Dudley, which he grasped affectionately, and then let go.

“ So,” I said, “ you almost keep Euphorbia hours, Doctor, do you ? Dining at three o’clock ! — in compliment to Dudley, I suppose ; but let him come and spend a month with me, and I’ll enlist him in fashion’s train.”

“What! teach him the value of health by the loss of it. Eight o’clock dinners, eh? No, no; none of *your* matriculations, my freakish Countess. The lad has health to boast of now; and if he despises warning, he deserves to lose it.”

“Why, my dear sir, we keep very *early* hours; all the difference being in the *name* we give our meal. For example, what we in England call breakfast, he may call dinner; what we name dinner, let him fancy his collation: and strictly, and in fact, this is the case: and as for retiring to rest, that should be as early as the young Civilian pleases, — in the morning.”

I gained my point; and Dudley is to spend a week with us, a month hence, at Richmond, when I shall introduce him to the fashionable world, as a newly-imported object of curiosity and admiration, — a youthful Guanche! If he does not, in less than a week, fall in love with one of my charming guests, tell Claudy I’ll

forfeit all my reliance on the cosmetic powers of cold cream, and rose-colour window-curtains.

Upon my life, Claudy will have no bad bargain in this business, after all ; for by a finer youth I never had the honour of being handed down stairs, and into my carriage. And yet, would you believe it, though I purposely reminded him I was still his aunt, he persisted in addressing me as Lady Alford ; and even blushed, when I, with a nod and a smile, and a kiss-hand, said, “ Good-bye, nephew.”

And Claudy, as I understand from the letters of Eliot, and Widow Grantley, conducts herself like a wise little woman, and goes on with her daily avocations with alacrity and good-humour. I have a commission for you to execute, my dear Mrs. Balfour : — go directly to Euphorbia, to Jane, to my most venerable sister Jenny, and desire her, without delay, to take a sup — Now don't

mistake me. Do you think I mean eau-de-vie? Something a-kin to it, though. Let Widow Grantley contrive to get hold of St. Leon's* elixir of life, and I promise her the guardianship of all my female progeny, grand-daughters and all, that she may bring them up on the milk of propriety, and the flour of common sense; better, after all, than the milk of roses, and l'esprit de jasmin.

I know, that had I been in Claudy's place, all Teneriffe should have heard my complaints at the loss of this charming youth. No piping Sappho, no blubbing Ariadne, nor hair-wrenching CEnone, should have surpassed me in expressions of grief, or loudness of lamentation; for though Dudley may have promised, nay, sworn to be constant, we experienced matrons are aware, that at lovers' vows, the man in the sky, with the thunder-bolt, laughs.

* Godwin's "St. Leon."

I was a wife at seventeen. And now, my dear native of the Atlantic Islands, to prove to you what are some of our English boarding-schools, or rather, (to be more liberal,) what some of us boarding-school ladies turn out, I will honestly confess the number of times that I fancied myself up to my finely-shaped ears in love, before any man really convinced himself that he was sincerely in love with me.

At the age of fifteen, I found myself placed, by the death of my mother, at a school of eminence, as the alternative of living with my sister Grantley, (that was my first error.) A ball at the foreign ambassador's in the neighbourhood was graced by my presence, when I danced the usual number of dances with a young cornet of dragoons; and, before six o'clock in the morning, was desperately bewitched in his favour. As I had an opportunity of spying his regimentals daily, during his walks and rides, from that time my delicate fingers could not support the weight of a pencil, of a pen,

or a needle. The army-list was my study ; scarlet and white my colours ; and military music my passion. The only benefit I reaped from these amorous notions, was the cure of a lounging walk, which, until then, I thought peculiarly fashionable. A firm step, and an easy carriage, when softened down to the proper medium, gave me an air of great advantage over my companions, who, however, took their revenge, by hastening to inform me, that Cornet O'Roderick had run away with an old widow, and her jointure, from the neighbourhood of Petersham, who had, on that condition, promised to purchase his promotion.

The transition from army to navy came in course : being on a visit in town at Lord E——'s, the uncle of my present hopeful husband, in less than a week I was over head and ears in love and idleness (generally inseparables) with a young lieutenant, introduced to me at Covent-garden Theatre, (Wild Oats for ever !) as a brother-officer of

his, by Miles Cavendish himself. The next day he dined with us, and in the evening I sang and played, and he did me the favour of accompanying me in the *then* fashionable "Lullaby," and the *ever* fashionable "Rule Britannia." Three more attacks, thought I, and he lowers his top-sails, strikes to my flag, and I take him in tow with flying colours. For a whole week I was engaged in poring over Cook's Voyages, and drawing ships and boats for card-racks. I read nothing but the Naval Chronicle, or sported ribbons but of navy-blue.

A few evenings after, Lord E—— enquired of Lieut. Starboard where was his wife? and why he had not brought her to town with him? to which my *true blue* returned, he had left her at Plymouth with the children, having only come to town upon admirable (a slip of the pen) Admiralty business — two words not *always* of synonymous import.

Now in this case was I to blame, my dear friend? How was it possible for me to imagine that a young slim fellow of cheerful musical abilities, not yet one-

and-twenty, who had been a midshipman only the other day, could have already shackled himself with a wife and posterity? Upon my life, those tied-up rogues, to make known to us damsels who are on the look-out, that their hearts are already captured, should be compelled, like us, to wear on one of their sturdy fingers the badge of slavery. Golden for marriage, and black for widowhood; with liberty to *reverse* this fashion as circumstances might warrant.

Well,—a party of us youngsters went to Oxford, when a square cap and a black gown, (a youth inside them, you will understand,) exerted, in his function of guide, the juggling arts of a sorcerer; and I immediately fancied myself born to be the wife of a divine, (in beauty I was half that already.) By the help of a fertile imagination, I saw my gentleman-commoner a curate, a rector or vicar, an archdeacon, a right honourable — no, a right reverend, I fancy is the word, (no matter, *they* ought to be synonymous,) a

prebendary, a rosy dean, and a bishop :— there I had the grace to stop, before I touched either of their graces :— for one of the *arch* ladies, I did not know which, being of my family, (a hundred and fifty degrees removed,) I had the conscience not to covet either of their dead slippers with purple rosettes.

Eliot, who was his fellow-collegian, invited him to Oakland Park, whilst I was at home for the holidays, Louisa Clonmore (then Miss Vivian) being my companion. I soon became astonishingly partial to Gothic architecture, painted windows, vestibules, cathedrals, colleges, surplices, and cambric bands ! I remember drawing a landscape, (a vile performance,) with a little country church, and a spire at a distance, peeping from among the trees, and in the fore-ground a cottage, with the smoke of bright blue issuing from the chimney, to show it was inhabited ; and underneath I wrote these words, “ Love and a Cottage ;” which admirable design (*design*,—you comprehend me, — pray admire my candour) I slipped into the first volume of

the Antiquities of Oxfordshire, which I knew he was reading at the time. The next day I found the very identical drawing in my work-box, with the words I had written drawn through by a pencil, and the following substituted : but you know the old adage, about love and poverty, and a door, and the blue smoke of the chimney. Now, though *he* might not be able to boast an intimacy with the blind boy of soft emotions, he could not possibly be ignorant, that *I* could never form the most distant acquaintance with the gaunt fiend of penury. He acted nobly, and shortly after became master of a grammar-school in the North of England. — Relating this among all my girlish follies to Alford, he made a memorandum in his pocket-book, to the honour of the Reverend ; and in less than a twelve-month after our own marriage, presented him a living, by which he was enabled to exchange the irksome labour of a school, for the peace and quiet of a college-life.

Now, to relate the consequences of folly the fourth : — I was in town at the

time, and caught a sore-throat, which was followed by a low intermittent fever, that continued its company, though its introducer was gone.

An amiable youth of a physician attended me, who looked so soft, and felt my pulse so tenderly, and behaved so anxiously and exquisitely kind, when leading my feeble steps from the sofa to the window, and from the window to the sofa, that I concluded he was deeply smitten ; and I began to reflect how I ought to conduct myself when I should become a physician's wife. I took care to be well assured that *he* was single ; and from his manner concluded it depended on myself, whether he should remain single much longer.

I recovered, and yet his attendance continued. When I thought the crisis of my fate at hand, one of our housemaids was attacked by the same illness. Figure to yourself, a short, thick-set, round-shouldered, great staring woman, with red elbows, and asses' ears. I, being quite restored, paid her a visit in her garret, to see whether she was in want of

any thing ; when judge my surprise, on beholding at her side my young physician, who was feeling her pulse so gently, and speaking so kindly, and looking with such tender anxiety ! — giving her his arm, in common with the nurse, to assist her feeble steps ! My dear, I perfectly stared with astonishment ; and it was some time before I chose to comprehend, that what I mistook for individual *penchant*, was nothing more than professional manner.

I fell next into the company of a dashing young student of one of the Inns of Court, who was staying with my brother-in-law, Grantley, whilst I was on a visit to my sister. We were at Wimbledon at the time ; and it being summer, our evenings were passed in rambling among the green lanes, and over the common. I once contrived to engross the whole of his attention to myself, although other young ladies were of the party. I wished for honeysuckles out of the hedges ; dog-roses out of the

bushes ; wild flowers from the banks ; butterflies from the air ; and so forth. These services performed, (and he of course obliged to carry his gleanings for me,) I managed, with a very pretty lisp, to express fear at every sound and motion : a cow, a carriage, a horse, a sheep, even a stray duck, or goose, or fowl, had its use ; and, at last, a sparrow, or chaffinch among the bushes, set me in most perilous alarm ; — a frog was a legitimate cause for fright : and thus was spent the walk in pretty cries and exclamations, of “ Oh dear ! ” and “ Bless me ! ” and running this way, and that way, and every way but the right ; suffering my muslin paraphernalia to be entangled among the briers, and blushing and simpering at every stile we came to, though conscious of possessing the best foot and ankle in company. Thus, I repeat, passed that evening, and from that day, adieu to my serjeant-at-law : in all our future promenades, he had either an arm for sister Jane, or one for old Grantley ; or a couple of arms for two of my young friends ; or he was too late to join

in our walk, or too early ; in short, never again could I catch him in my toils, — it was *brief* work with him : and he soon after got a convenient friend to *subpæna* him to town, by which his visit was shortened, when I was heard openly to declare, that of all the men on earth, I never would marry a lawyer.

“ Really,” thought I, “ the deuce is in all the men ;” and then came Miss Conscience, with her face of demure propriety, “ *female reserve*” written in legible characters on the bandeau round her grizzled head of decorum ; and with a sharp rap on my unfortunate knuckles, she said, “ rather, is not the deuce in you ? if you wish to secure the men, let them alone.”

And after all, Mrs. Balfour, I was married more in the German princess fashion, unsight and unseen, than in that of an English girl of quality. 'Pon my honour, I had scarcely exchanged three quarters of a word, or the tenth part of a look, with Lord Alford, when Eliot one day

stopped me in the height of my flirting here, and coquetting there, and waltzing round and round, by laying before my dazzled eyes the sumptuous coronet of a countess.

It appeared that this noble young swain had fallen desperately in love with me, merely out of contradiction ; for, I suppose, had I cast upon him one half of the smiles and pretty condescensions I had lavished on the preceding train of beaux, (passing shadows like those of Banquo, giving place to the golden-crowned substance,) my young earl would, after their fashion, have adjusted his neckcloth in the glass, stroked his whiskers, looked at me with a “ What was it you were saying, Miss Howard ? ” and strode off without an answer ; but here, having, instead of encouragement, met with indifference, he comes to the point at once, by appealing, unknown to me, to my brother.

Eliot, with all the solemn dignity of a Pope’s Nuncio, laid the illustrious youth’s credentials before me, saying, “ I shall introduce my friend Lord Al-

ford to you to-morrow, sister ; take your own time to become acquainted with him : but once you have made up your mind, either one way or the other, I will take care, Caroline, that he shall not be made a fool of."

"Mighty fine, truly!" thought I, "and yet you haughty magistrates of the creation have made a fine fool of me, and more than a dozen times ; and here I am not allowed to exercise my talents that way, even in one solitary instance!"

I was deucedly afraid of Eliot at that time ; but with Alford, when I thought myself perfectly secure of him, I did try to play off a few of my airs : but Lord, I found him such a "Gunpowder Percy," that is, whilst still a bachelor, and in doubt, (I will do him justice there, he was unlike his sex in that respect,) that I got frightened, and was glad to compromise upon fair terms.

I remember one morning in particular, some trifle rose to a desperate quarrel (and, my dear Mrs. Balfour, had I my choice, and were such goings on the fashion, I would rather that my *intended* should

give me a good beating at once, than that my *husband* should throw me (an angry word) :— I forget the origin of our dispute, something about a bride's maid, but it happened only a very short time before our marriage :— carriages were bespoken, jewels ordered, dresses made, house and villa taken, the hoop of gold bought, and the day of horrors named ; when I, thinking myself as sure of him as if I had already pronounced the words “ for better, for worse,” remarked, with the most insulting nonchalance, “ Well, Lord Alford, do just as you please — it is not yet too late — you are your own master — you know *your* happiness is alone what I desire — consult that, I beg, and *I* shall be perfectly satisfied.”

“ The d——l you will !” was my lord's reply ; “ Oh, if it is such a matter of indifference to *you*, Miss Howard — You have not forgotten, I hope, certain circumstances which I have already detailed to you — My cousin Georgey — I must have a little conversation with *her* ;” and as he looked in the chimney-glass, he pulled up his collar, settled his

quizzing-glass, and pinched his eyebrows: adding, “yes, positively I’ll speak this day to Georgey.”

“Do, if you dare,” I cried, starting up. Now such words from a lady! and a lady of fashion! But, my dear madam, my *words* were perfectly gentle, compared with my *attitude*. Alford turned round with one of his plaguy seducing smiles, and holding out his arms, the fop! sang and parodied — “Lady, strike home!”

Thus, my good friend, have I run through the follies of my early youth, over which Cavendish and I (for Alford was, like myself, too young to regard them as such) have since our marriage had many a laugh, particularly when chance has thrown in our way any one of the individuals above-mentioned, whose career, and even name, I had long since forgotten, though they had not so readily lost sight of me.

Here you see the effects of a neglected education, and the mischiefs resulting to female youth from the want of

the early vigilance and superintendence, which none but a mother, or some very near relative, can be expected to bestow. But for my known connections and acknowledged rank in life, with my perverted imagination, in which the seeds of religion and morality planted by my mother and sister Jane had had no time to grow, might I not have become the victim or the dupe of mankind, and thereby perished as a worthy member of society ?

I lost Lord Alford whilst I was still young, and with unfixed principles. Finding myself once more free, and, of course, possessed of a greater share of liberty than before my marriage, I had the sense to distrust my own prudence ; and though, in conformity to Alford's wish that I would, after his death, reside with his mother as long as she lived, no sooner did death separate me from the gay dowager, than I, with desperate fortitude, tore myself from the bright circles of fashion, and threw myself on the protection of my brother, conscious that if left alone in the world, I should

go astray, by which you are to understand make some imprudent match with a needy adventurer : — with Eliot, my honour, my peace, and character, were safe ; and I was resolved not to quit his roof and protection, unless consigned by himself to that of the husband he should with me approve of.

There are other circumstances in which I have been placed, but those I pass over, and have only to assure you, my dear madam, that a happier wife, at this present hour, cannot exist.

However, I must not get serious, or in the dumps of sensibility ; — no, no, in a few minutes I expect Cavendish, and a prime maxim of mine is, that one of the first duties of a wife is to receive her husband on his return home (let his cruise have been short or long) with a cheerful voice, and a face all smiles.

Well, my good Mrs. Balfour, and what have I more to say, than that I yet hope, in the company of you and your bonny Scotchman, to take my long talked-of trip to the Highlands.

Oh! by the by, I hear you have imported a niece into Teneriffe — was that to *match* my importation of a divine? — Have they any intention of making a divine match of it? or is the day of sacrifice with this high pontiff already over? — If I am not too late, I should wish to give Miss Helen a yard and a half of advice on gilt post paper. If she is not irrecoverably lost — in love, let her, in the choice of a partner, keep in mind about half-a-dozen indispensable qualities which I am about to enumerate: — and let her trust to the word of a matron, who is now within four-and-twenty years — that is *months*, of the black-and-white, brown-and-grey, age of forty. I spent full half an hour yesterday morning, Savage on one side of me, and Patience on the other, having my intrusive grey hairs turned out of the company of my brown hair, the original and lawful possessors of crown, pole, and fore-top, — *fore-top*! a little of *the shop* that. By the way, what could induce me to choose a pair of waiting-women of such fanciful

names, which try my temper twenty times a day at least ; and this might easily be avoided, if they would enter into a mutual compact, of watching in what sort of a humour I rise in the morning ; instead of which, when I in the course of the day am in a passion, and ring for one or other of them, Savage is sure to make her appearance, and this is fuel to fire, for “ Savage do this,” and “ Savage do that,” in less than half an hour renders me a very *femme Sauvage* myself. — And when I am in mighty good-humour, all hurry, bustle, and animation, in comes Patience ! and that very word, “ Patience here, and Patience there !” repeated ten times in a minute, puts me out of all patience, or sobers me into a mawkish drawl, as if I had taken a dose *quan. suf.* of hops and opium.

Well, to return to Helen, “ ever fair and young ;” let her above all things marry a little man, and a man with dimples in his cheeks. I have already mentioned the superior advantages enjoyed

by the first class of beings, and with respect to the second, depend upon it a pair of round dells on each side of the mouth, are of more consequence than she may be aware of. Conscious of this beauty, the possessor takes pretty good care ever to display it, until smiles grow familiar, and what was at first vanity, becomes the settled character of the face ; and if on earth there is a prettier sight to me than any other, it is that of a charming, open, good-humoured countenance, (no matter whether handsome or not,) good-humour is the equivalent to beauty ; and give me a pleasant-looking, milk-fed Sylvanus, in preference to an indignant Apollo.

I certainly once had a horror of a wig, yet married a man with a pate as bald as old Time. Now should Helen turn Jack adrift, and meet such a one as I describe, who may have lost his head — his hair, I mean — by the wind of a cannon-ball, let her be under no concern on that account, but marry him at once, and like me prove, that the growth of affection will keep pace with the honours of the

head. In less than three months after *our* marriage, Cavendish sported his natural auburn locks, and I no longer sported with his affection.

And does your niece really intend to take pity on Jack, and his creaking boots? the sound of which, like the smacking of a French postillion's whip, announces his approach, though at twenty yards distance. Then for the sake of your nerves, my dear Mrs. Balfour, should he be domesticated with you, do pray give Miss Helen a few gentle hints from me, that she may, during courtship, (I'll be shot if she ever will be able after,) try to break him of all his boyish *blue-coated* tricks, and youthful cantab fopperies, his pompous readings, his flourish of the hands, his stretched-out legs, his drinking healths, his affectation of whispering in company, his forming and polishing his nails at table, his my *ladying* and my *lording*, his lifting up his eye-brows until his forehead is in ridges like the skin of a baboon, his starts of surprise, his *ad libitum* ejaculations, and sundry other unfashion-

able oddities, which, with all his solid excellencies, make up the character of the Rev. Jack Turner.

Do you think I am quizzing him, in calling him Jack? No such thing, my dear madam : some men, instead of Henry and William, are christened Harry and Billy, and I have been told that at Turner's baptism, when the question was put at the font, " What is the name of this child ?" out from the blundering mouth of the sponsor tumbled the word Jack, instead of John.

Lord, Mrs. Balfour, I could no more finish a letter in a serious humour of propriety, than I could resist the temptation of giving a Rowland for an Oliver, where I had a grudge : — and here goes, hap-hazard : — that is, my *Unica Virtus* ; — and by the crooked beaks of a couple of clambering magpies, I'm in as great a rage as a Countess and a beauty ought to be ! Would you believe it ? — but upon my life I had better be silent, and put my disappointment at not seeing the Prince of Nabobs at my last brilliant *fête* in my ridicule ; or, to

escape a jolt from the track of a waggon-wheel, I may fall into a quarry.

So to return from the intoxications of fashion and routes, to the common milk-and-water affairs of life, Love and Folly, personified — who are yoke-fellows, as inseparable as are the names of Southey and Coleridge on the high road of literature, or those of my Lords G—— and G—— in the political circus. Give my best wishes to the clever little parson, and assure him that I'll drink — sip, is the word — a glass of imperial — that is, tokay—at his wedding, and dance a quadrille (if possible,) to the tune of “Moggy Lawder,” or “Come under my Plaidy, sweet Lassy.”

And tell Miss Helen from me, neither to attempt to wind the silk of life, like sister Jane, through all its mazy difficulties, nor yet to fling it into the fire with impatience, like my worship; but when it gets entangled, to make the best of a bad bargain, by cutting it and putting it in a paper, and chusing for her purpose a less complicated skein.

And with this modicum of advice to

all our sex, I close the log-book of our correspondence for the present, determined not to open it again, until my son and heir can sing in downright English, "Steady boys, steady! we'll fight and we'll conquer again and again!"

Ever, my old friends,

Your enchanting

CAROLINE ALFORD.

LETTER LIV.

Mrs. Clonmore to Mrs. Grantley.

YOUR letters, with those of Sir Eliot and Miss Howard*, have all, my dear madam, been received, and, hitherto, punctually answered. We are now greatly in arrear; and need I remind you, that August, the period fixed upon for Dudley's return to Teneriffe, is past, and that he is still in England! Of this you must have some idea, as you have not heard from him or from us, respecting his departure hence. But how, my dear Mrs. Grantley, shall we inform you of the total revolution that has taken place in the mind of this singular young man: in what words can we describe what has past; what apologies offer in his behalf, or what consolation hold out?

* None of which appear.

About two months since, Lady Alford gave a ball at her house in Park-lane, which was attended by royalty ; and, indeed, every star in the world of fashion. Dudley, being in town, was invited ; and from that hour his mind became poisoned, if I may use so harsh an expression, by a strange combination of circumstances, which occurred in his presence the same evening. A few days after, he came down to us to spend a month or so, when the change in him was so apparent, that it could not fail to strike us with wonder and apprehension. His spirits were depressed, and his person much altered for the worse. We questioned him as to his having had news from Teneriffe, and his answer was, “ All is well *there*.”

We had company to dine with us the same day ; and, amongst other gentlemen, a person high in the law. During dinner the conversation, at first, took a political turn, when, on a sudden, Lord D—— enquired of the guest above mentioned, “ What is this affair of Colonel Maxwell ? ” — (Sir Eliot will understand, that, unfortunately, this is his old

friend Charles, who ran off to Gretna Green with a young heiress, a few years since)—“Are they parted?”

“Yes,” said the other, “they are now twain. I have the legal proceedings in my hands; and it will be brought into the House next session.”

“But what has it all been about? Who is to blame?”

“Why he, originally, for marrying a giddy heiress, when he had not sufficient of the needful even to pay for the chaise-and-four, without getting behind-hand with his agent. But the fact is, he has led a sad life with her ever since they were married. Depend upon it, the affair at Lady Alford’s route, the other evening, was not the *beginning* of the dispute, but its *climax*.”

“Were you there?” enquired Lord D——.

“Yes;” and, turning to Dudley, “and so were you, my young friend. Did you remark what passed?”

The blushing face of our son showed but too well that he had; when his father, to divert attention from him, asked

the Counsellor to explain himself; for though he had seen the affair hinted at in the newspapers, he was wholly unacquainted with one of the parties, (the lady,) or the cause of contention.

“ The affair is simply this,” replied our law-guest: “ you may understand it in three words. Mrs. Maxwell, on her marriage, had 50,000*l.* or so; the husband not a shilling, excepting his pay. No sooner was the nuptial tie formed, than she (a worthless young fool, to say the best of her) wished to untie this true lover’s knot. Charles is warm, and tenacious in temper. Her reproaches stung him to the quick: but love conquered; and they contrived to endure each other until she became of age, when fresh sources of contention arose. Still all was kept a secret, from even the observation of their friends and guests. Last Wednesday, however, dissolved all connection between them; and legal measures are proceeding: for though she is perfectly innocent as a wife, he has taken care to give necessary grounds for separation. A pearl bracelet, or diamond

necklace, or something of that kind, broke, whilst dancing at Lady Alford's; was it not, Mr. Dudley?" Our son assented, and he continued: "Maxwell, upon this, reproached her carelessness, (the jewels were flying about the room,) when she retorted; he replied; and the wife grew sarcastic; and this in the presence of a few good-natured friends, who took care to repeat it. Thus did their contention become by degrees known to the whole circle, of perhaps two or three hundred persons. They parted; and from that hour have never met."

We listened to this account; but, in my own mind, I could see no reference in all this to *Dudley*, or *his* concerns. At last Lord D—— spoke:

"That is ever the way with those confounded heiresses! Charles Maxwell is rightly served: and he, too, that always professed so independent a spirit! A man, I am convinced, had better shoulder a musket, work on the highway, follow the plough, dredge for oysters, or work in the mines, than (provided he is himself pennyless) marry an heiress. This

very Mrs. Maxwell — I remember her before her marriage, was as pretty, and modest, and disinterested a girl, of as generous and liberal-minded a spirit, as a man would wish to meet with ; and see how she has treated this honest fellow, who doated upon her ; — to reproach him as a beggar, a fortune-hunter, a seducer ; and that in the hearing of her own relations.”

“ I understand ” — said the Counsellor, “ I was not by at the time, that she was thunderstruck at the effect produced on him by her words. But it was too late, the evil was past recall : he has fled to the continent, and *in company* ; and she may, if she pleases, be soon free, to make a more prudent choice.”

I know not, my dear and best friends, whether you have, by this time, anticipated what have been the sad consequences of Dudley's witnessing the dispute between the Maxwells ; and hearing, both in town, and now at our table, the general and individual opinion on the probable happiness of him, who, poor himself, and without connections,

title, or consequence, professional or otherwise, to throw into the opposite scale, marries an heiress, or fortune, as it is called.

Such, at present, is the situation of Dudley's mind. Sir Eliot's intentions, it is true, though acknowledged to us, and more than suspected by him, have never been openly declared, much less been the subject of conversation here; and yet his eyes have, by this introduction into the world, been opened, as to the footing he holds in society; and, I repeat, his mind is now poisoned, by the doubt of, whether, if offered him, he would or would not reject an heiress.

His father and he have already had repeated conversations on this subject; but the mischief is done — the evil impression was made in an hour, when, separated from us, he could not, by communicating what had passed, give us the opportunity of endeavouring, by argument, to efface it; and I fear that that impression is indelible. Judge yourselves. August is past: and he has not

even hinted at his departure for Teneriffe.

In the mean time, his industry is indefatigable. He prosecutes his studies with an ardour, which, I am fearful, will injure his health. He associates exclusively with students in his own line, and is almost incessant in his enquiries of the best and speediest methods whereby to acquire eminence, to get into practice, to arrive at distinction;—in short, to make a fortune: for, poor fellow! the truth is now discovered—he idolizes Claudy; but would reject her were she offered him:—and with a wild, romantic vehemence, of which I did not think him capable, he declares he will be the founder of his own fortune, and never marry, until he has realised what he shall consider as securing to himself not only independence, but the rank of a gentleman.

A few days since, I went into his room, to consult with him on a fresh stock of linen, which, I hoped, would be

ready for his voyage, should he determine on leaving us in October, as his father has fixed that period for his going, though he has not uttered a syllable himself on the business. At the moment, my homely thoughts were really so much engaged upon deep or narrow frills, high or low shirt-collars, long or short wristbands, that I forgot to knock at his door, and went in abruptly. He was writing, and to Claudy. At the side of his letter lay her picture, the glass of which was dim and misty; "Dudley," I said, "do I interrupt you? if I do, I'll step in again. But I wished to ask, is it the first, or the second week of next month, you leave England?"

He closed his letter; and turning over the back of his chair, replied, "My dear mother, I have no intention of leaving England."

"Dudley!" I cried, much surprised at his words, but more by his manner, which was unusually calm and decisive.

"I have postponed my voyage to Teneriffe," he continued.

Again I breathed freely ; and imitating his own composure, sat down, observing, “ Oh, for a few days. Well, your stock of linen shall be in readiness.”

“ You misunderstand me,” he replied ; “ it may be some years before I return to Teneriffe.”

And when he uttered these words, such was the uncommon firmness of manner that accompanied them, I felt at once shocked and terrified. “ Does your father, sir, know your intentions ? ” I, at last, summoned courage to enquire.

“ He does, my dear mother,” he replied, rising slowly, and seating himself by my side. He took my hand, and pressed it in his ; “ and you, also, must be acquainted with those intentions. My father has but just left me, and after a two hours’ conversation on the subject. Did you not meet him ? I have written to Sir Eliot, and to Mrs. Grantley,” he continued, pointing to some sealed letters on the table ; “ and I am now writing to Claudy.”

Her name appeared to soften him ; and, on observing a return to sensibility,

I could not help remarking, “ Dudley, Dudley, if this had been told me of you, could I have believed it? Thus to give up your better sense to the vain follies of a heated imagination; and, wantonly and ungratefully, to sport with the feelings of all who love you.”

At these words he started from my side; and never had I seen, until that moment, in real life, so perfect a resemblance to the poet’s imaginary *Douglas*, though, unfortunately for me, instead of looking on me with the tenderness due to a Lady Randolph, he regarded me as if I had been Glenalvon himself.

“ Ingratitude!” he replied; “ is it you, my mother, who tax me with ingratitude? And to whom am I ungrateful? — to Sir Eliot? whom, next to my own father, I love and revere; — to Mrs. Grantley? who succeeds yourself closely in my affections; — to Claudy!” — he stopped; and with a sort of bitterness added, “ Ungrateful to Claudy, indeed! the dearer half of my existence, the incessant object of my thoughts; the only

being, to attain whom (on my own terms) is, night and day, the blessed apparition that consoles my disappointment, and supports me in exertion ! Ingratitude ! if all this be ungrateful in your eyes, my mother, then indeed we must cease to understand one another."

Henry, as it afterwards appeared, had come to the door, designing to renew the conversation with his son ; but on hearing our voices had retired. As, however, he caught the sound of Dudley's voice, raised to a higher pitch than usual, he sent a servant up to say he wished to speak immediately to me, and at the same time ordered Robert to enquire of his master should he order his horse.

I joined Clonmore, and you may guess the nature of our conversation ; during which, we observed Dudley on horse-back, riding slowly up the Bath road, and unattended.

He returned to dinner more cheerful than usual, but as we had strangers with us, the debate on domestic affairs could

not be renewed. He is since gone back to his chambers in town, and, as his father hears from various friends, his studies are prosecuted with the most unremitting industry.

Thus, my dear friends, is accounted the non-appearance of Dudley at Teneriffe. Had we to deal with any other of our sons, we should know how to act; but with this youth, we are really ourselves perplexed, unconscious whether we take with him a right or a wrong course, whether we say too much or too little. All I have now to confess is this — he is your own; as such, act by him; and to the advice of those to whom he is so much indebted, and whom he loves next to ourselves, he may be brought to listen; by them, he may yet suffer himself to be governed. For his own sake, and need I add for yours and ours, we have only to hope Sir Eliot will, at least, make the attempt.

Ever your affectionate

LOUISA CLONMORE.

LETTER LV.

Sir Eliot Howard to Dudley Clonmore.

Euphorbia, Teneriffe.

AUGUST is past, and you are not returned. I have received six letters from you, dated September and October; but where are you yourself? — a breach of faith, nothing can excuse. Put sentiment out of the question, and place the business upon the broad footing of a compact between man and man, you gave me a voluntary promise of returning hither last August, (health and winds permitting,) and you are still in London. When you gave me that promise, you certainly fully intended to keep it; what then am I to understand by this conduct? I am willing to acquit you of mental reservation, but I cannot of having suffered yourself to become the dupe of fancy.

I allow the plea you bring forward in your last letter, that you are no longer a boy ; but how can I agree to the sentence that follows, in which you claim the privileges of a man, and expect to be allowed to decide for yourself? You are, it is granted, too old to be governed by force ; but, by the laws of the land, as well as those of nature, are, as yet, too young to be left sole master of your own conduct. You may reply, that *I* have been the original cause of your present source of uneasiness, by having in your childhood demanded you of your parents, and reared you in solitude : I confess my selfishness, — I was sinking into the grave, — they gave you to my guardianship, and thus have you been the means of restoring me to many years of comparative happiness. — On the other hand, with respect to yourself, I appeal to Dr. H——, and other medical men, to assert, that had it not been for your removal to this, or a similar genial climate, (and such was the state of warfare on the continent there was little choice of any spot, excepting this island, and

Madeira,) that but for your timely change of air, you had died. You may blame me for not restoring you to England and your family immediately on the establishment of your health, and therein your censure may be well grounded; and yet I *had* hoped, that nothing on my part had been wanting to render your prolonged life a blessing to yourself, in proportion as it became a blessing to me.

Add to the above circumstances, you, as the godson of my wife, had a greater hold on my affections than any of your brothers could possibly have; indeed I question whether, had *you* been denied to me by your parents, I should have adopted any other child.

That Lady Howard was your god-mother is of little concern to you; you were an infant of two years old when she died, therefore her image can offer itself to you under no impressive form: but to me it can, it ever does; for repeatedly I have seen you in her arms, and when pressed to her bosom, she has more than once said, "I trust in Heaven,

Eliot, that we also shall be blessed with sons, but should we not, I think we must adopt this darling boy, this godson of mine."

You, Dudley, cannot have the slightest recollection of my wife, but you have seen her picture at your father's; and if it would be any gratification to know more of her, ask him for the written account of our first acquaintance and subsequent marriage*; read it, Dudley, and with attention; I have no doubt he has it still—read it, and learn to appreciate the merits of her who regarded you as a son, and many of whose virtues Claudy inherits.

And now that I have mentioned my daughter's name, you must suffer me to remark that, laying aside all reserve on the subject, I shall henceforward put your future happiness, or the contrary, into your own hands; and from this hour, show you that I no longer consider you a boy, but am as willing as yourself to acknowledge, that where the

* See the conclusion of volume the first.

heart is concerned, I must begin to treat you as if already arrived at manhood. — You may, perhaps, censure me for having brought you up in habits of the closest intimacy with a young and certainly beautiful girl, whose strong sensibility, open disposition, and unconcealed attachment to yourself, warranted some show of correspondent feelings on your part. I must now speak plain, and therein, I trust, I neither violate that respect due to my own character and rank in life, or remove that veil of chaste reserve, through which my daughter should be alone regarded.

If I see no error of judgment or breach of propriety in making an offer of the following nature, neither can I incur censure, should that offer be refused. I chose you, I adopted you, I reared you to what you are; but there my duty had its bounds; the heart knows no controul. My daughter might have fixed her affections on you without a return; you might have loved her, and your love have met with indifference: — it was not for a third person to interfere between a

youthful couple thus situated. No art whatever has been used to inspire you with affection — you have been merely educated together under one roof, as brother and sister; and yet what have been the consequences? Such, Dudley, as I ever fondly hoped — a mutual and voluntary attachment has been daily forming between you, which is now ripened into full and confirmed love.

After this explicit and candid explanation on my part, I have very little to add. Since your late defection, your correspondence with Claudy has necessarily passed through my hands, I being responsible for the consequences, as they may interfere with my daughter's future happiness. Your letters to her glow with all the purest, we will allow, but at the same time warmest expressions of everlasting affection. You love her, — I believe it, and I am confident you are equally dear to my child; but unless, by yielding blindly to my guardianship, you convince me on what foundation her future peace of mind is to rest, all further communication between you from

this time must cease ; with me, I trust, it never will, until the death of one or the other.

Do you now understand me, or must I enter on a further avowal ? In the determination you adopted of following a profession, I saw no obstruction to my future hopes ; indeed the contrary, as I observed in one of my letters to the friend of my youth, your respected father, “ A little law knowledge will teach Dudley the better to take care of his future fortune.”

You may remark that herein my hopes outstripped your own ; and that in that observation, I anticipated your intentions, and disposed of your affections without your knowledge or concurrence : pardon me, such as were then are now my intentions ; the decision of the present hour is that formed in your childhood. I repeat, the affections of the heart are not to be controlled where the object is worthy, otherwise parental and guardian advice and authority ought and must interfere ; but in your

case, apprehensions of this nature are out of the question.

You have therefore to learn, that although I permitted you to enter on the study of a profession, I never intended it should make any part of your future reliance for support. Of this, Dr. H——, Mr. Balfour, and Mr. Turner, can best inform you, for they are witnesses to my Will, which was made six years since, and is now deposited in the first law-hands in England. By that Will, you will find, that to the last shilling, (excepting sundry annuities,) my fortune is shared equally between you and my daughter. By a clause I have provided, that should you intermarry with Claudy after my death, you are to take the name and arms of Howard. You will thus observe that you are both left perfectly free, each to marry whomsoever may become your choice ; and that a *hope* only is held out, that you may choose each other ; this being the first and most cherished wish of the testator.

Have I now been sufficiently explicit ; and do you now fully comprehend, that

my only motive for concealing from you, even at our last parting, my hope that you would one day, and that during my life-time, become my son-in-law, was to leave you perfect master of your own affections ; and can you now blame me, that, conscious as I am, they bend the way I wish, and fix upon my child, whose tenderness is wholly engrossed by yourself ; can you, my dear and beloved boy, be longer deaf to the entreaties I make to you to return, and without delay, to my arms, — to your own paternal roof, — to the bosoms that so fondly cherish you.

You deceive yourself, my child, if you think that you are prepared to buffet with the world, to make your way, with labour, through the intricate windings of any profession whatsoever, to gain a livelihood ; in short, to earn your bread. Your brothers have been educated in the active routine of public and private schools ; they have been accustomed to the self-denial system, and the severe discipline and deprivations attendant on that state, in which a man who has to build his own fortune ever finds himself ;

but it is not so with you. You, my Dudley, underwent sufferings during the first seven years of your life, from which your brothers were exempted. Thus were advantages equally balanced between you. They, blessed with health and vigour, were trained to exertion: you, afflicted from your birth, were nursed in the lap of indulgence, the fond object of all our care, the pride, the ornament, the blessing of Euphorbia.

You have now been sufficiently long in England, to grant Claudy the merits of being your real choice. Whilst insulated with us, you had no opportunities of exercising that first privilege of man, the power of choice. You are still young in years, it is true, but not in intellect, or judgment. Have you seen an object you prefer to Claudy? If you have, remain in England, where I will still support you as my son; and, when your unalterable determination is known, the spirit of my Will shall be put in force. Let no consideration of my child come

across you, like a gleam of pity. I trust that my daughter will rise superior to the pity of any man. Withdraw your love from her, and give it to another, and you will find that she needs no prompter how to act, even on such a trial. I would stake my existence, from the knowledge I have of her strength of mind, her sense of honour and delicacy, and, above all, her entire submission, daily renewed, to the will of Providence, that, dear as you are to her this day, were she, to-morrow, to hear you were married, she would, after the first feelings of nature had subsided, lift up her heart in prayer, for your and your chosen partner's happiness.

To put the final stroke to all mystery and reserve between you and me, I have only a few lines to add. You are, now, my adopted son. When turned of one-and-twenty, may you become my son-in-law; and I shall then have reason to confess, that, after my own marriage, the happiest moment of my life was that, when, in my little chapel at Euphorbia, were united in matrimony the dearest

objects of my heart, — my Claudy, to her faithful and beloved Dudley.

Whatever you may determine, my blessing will be ever yours,

ELIOT HOWARD.

P. S. Claudy, as an apology for not sending you, as you requested, a letter full of rose-leaves, desires me to say, that the once beautiful rose-tree you helped, with her, to plant, is almost withered; that *she* has not been to blame: she nursed it with tenderness; but that an unexpected blight has nearly destroyed every hope.

LETTER LVI.

Dudley Clonmore to Sir Eliot Howard.

Cavendish-Square, London.

OH, my friend, my guardian, my dear protector, my more than father, what a letter is this I have received from you! What an impression, at once rapturous and mournful, has it left upon my mind! *Is it, then, true? and is it possible?* Yet, knowing you so well, how could I ever doubt it? May I, then, look forward to a blissful point of existence, when I shall become in reality your son; when I may call you father; when Claudy will be mine?

I have read the narrative you mention; and with what delight, and interest! My love for the memory of Lady Howard is increased; but not that for her daughter, — for it was incapable of increase.

I know Claudy to be an affectionate, a noble, a disinterested girl ; and yet — would that I had something worthy of herself to offer in exchange. But I have nothing. All the advantages will be on her side. Except what I possess from your bounty, I have nothing to bestow. I am portionless, obscure, of humble, though respectable birth ; and have not one single merit to weigh against her beauty, her youth, her fortune, her superior rank, and high connections.

If it were possible, — but I suppose it is not, — you would not deceive me on this subject ; you never *did* deceive me, (as I can well remember,) through the whole course of my education. You think it then impossible for me to acquire, we will say, in the space of five years, or perhaps less, by incessant application, a fortune. No ; not exactly a fortune : I shall have no need of that, as you have already provided for me in money affairs. But, if I could gain some consequence in the world, a name, a distinction. I have been thinking of adding to my professional studies, those

which might bring me forward in the diplomatic line. Suppose you were to write to your friends in England, and have me employed as secretary to an embassy, or something of that nature? Would not my proficiency in languages be of service? I am master, you know, of the English, French, Spanish, Italian, and German, besides the dead languages. I feel rather weary of the law. I should greatly prefer being a *chargé d'affaires*, or an ambassador, or something of that kind; and, perhaps, my future services might entitle me to knighthood. The next step, to a peerage, is no such great difficulty; and, I think, Claudy would make as lovely a Countess as Lady Alford herself.

Oh, how I should like to see my own dear, dear Claudy, a Countess! How I wish, (and only for her beloved sake,) that I were a Marquis, or a Duke. I wonder did the Honourable Arthur Wellesley ever think that *he* should wear a ducal coronet. But I am not a noble soldier; I am nobody!

Is it not very strange, my dear friend, that when I am writing to you, or Mrs. Grantley, or my Claudy, — she *is* mine now, you know, by your own gift, your own confession, and I'll not relinquish her to any man on earth, be he who he may; and I'll marry her the instant I gain a name in the world: — is it not very singular, I repeat, that, when corresponding with the inmates of Euphorbia, I feel as if I was still a *boy*? My style grows puerile; and yet my heart warms, nay, glows with delight. On the contrary, at Bloomfield Rectory, (and yet I love my parents, fondly love them,) and here in town, and particularly with strangers, I feel as if I were a *man*, they treat me with such respect and formality! as if, instead of nearly eighteen, I were five-and-twenty.

And then Lady Alford no longer suffers me to treat her with familiarity; but there I think she is right; and, indeed, I do not feel much inclined to be on familiar terms with her, or any other lady, although I love and admire her most sincerely; besides which, Captain

Cavendish is one of my greatest favourites. Their children are charming; and the little boy has as many names as Don Zulvago himself, which I remarked to Lady Alford, who blushed, but made me no answer. I hope I did not offend her by my observation; but, really, to add to that of Cavendish the names of Frederick, Miles, Eliot, Dudley, Howard, (I am one of its godfathers, and you, by proxy, the other,) seems rather fanciful, as I told her, when she replied, "This little sea-horse, at present, bears on his shoulders all the names designed for my future boys; so, according as they shall be born, we will strip him of some of his honours, and leave him those of Miles Eliot only."

How pleased you will be to hear that I am going, next week, with Captain Cavendish, under the guidance of M. St. Eloi, the French gentleman educated in England by my father, to Paris; from whence we purpose visiting Switzerland and Italy, and to sail from Malta, after

a visit to the Isle of Elba, for Spain. From Lisbon we purpose embarking for Ostend, whence we shall proceed to Brussels and Waterloo, visit some parts of Germany, and endeavour, if possible, to reach Moscow and St. Petersburg, as I have a great desire to see the northern courts, of which I form, in my mind, a grand and magnificent idea.

We must certainly travel with the rapidity of state couriers, if, as Captain Cavendish calculates, (winds and tides permitting,) we are to complete this tour in a few months. One or two of my brothers will accompany us, the soldier and William the Lieutenant.

In answer to your former enquiries respecting the state of my funds, as my father observes, I think I certainly give you the best proof, that though *his* son by nature, I am *yours* by adoption, for, in compliance with your commands, I have drawn upon your bankers with the magnificence of a nobleman.

This tour completed, I shall return to my studies with double ardour, and shall expect when I come back to England to

find many treasures waiting my arrival ; (letters from all the beloved inhabitants of Euphorbia.) I fix on no time, as you see, for my visit to you, for having broken my word once, you have no longer a right to depend upon me, that is, on the one subject between us ; and yet prepare for my taking you by surprise, as an honest Hibernian would say, one of these days, when I hope to find you, my dear friend, my Aunt Grantley, and my own Claudy, still enjoying the full blessings of health and happiness.

So prays your and their affectionate and grateful

DUDLEY CLONMORE.

LETTER LVII.

The Rev. Henry Clonmore to Sir Eliot Howard.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Cavendish-Square, London.

As I informed you in my last letter of Dudley's having quitted England on his continental tour with Captain Cavendish, St. Eloi, and two of my other sons, you will feel, of course, anxious to know all their proceedings, and whether your alarming prediction, founded on the peculiarity of Dudley's character, has been verified. I am truly happy to say it has not; whatever may have been the lures held out to him, to recommend a residence on any part of the continent in preference to England and Teneriffe, they have failed, and last week he returned with still more alacrity and joy than were shown even on his setting out. He has come back to us highly gratified

by his travels, as he entitles them, of which he has kept notes, in order to write a journal for your and Claudy's amusement; and fully prepared to resume his studies with even more indefatigable ardour, if possible, than ever.

You really do him injustice in supposing that he is over delicate in calling on you to honour his drafts; he receives the allowance you make him with as little scruple as your letters, and I should advise you to limit your guardian generosity to one-third of his present income, had not repeated instances come to my knowledge, that he puts the superfluity of your kindness to the noblest purposes. His charities are so unbounded, that, as I observed to him, he certainly at times fancies himself a Lorenzo de Medici, when he replied, — “No, I am only his agent.”

As you so solemnly charged him, he has been most diligently careful of his health, which, after the first seasoning to our humid, foggy, and variable atmosphere, has never been known to suffer from his own negligence: — excess of

all kinds he has strictly guarded against, and his cheek and eyes still display that decided and peculiar bloom and open candour, which are the certain sureties of health and innocence.

I was interrupted yesterday morning in my letter by visitors to Dr. H——, at whose house in town I am staying a month this spring; my principal motive being a wish personally, yet secretly, to guard Dudley from dangers that may threaten his youth and inexperience through the attempts of unprincipled adventurers of either sex.

This I can do more effectually by a residence near him than by letter, as I would prefer protecting him whilst still so young, without explaining my motives, and thereby suddenly snatching from his eyes that heavenly veil through which he, at present, is induced to view mankind. — He hitherto knows evil and vice only in books; he has associated with nothing but what is excellent and good: and though he does certainly take sudden predilections for, and aversions to

strangers, (the result of a pretended skill in physiognomy, pardonable at his fanciful age,) he judges of many with whom he becomes acquainted through the medium of himself.

He has chambers at Lincoln's Inn, and I am *grazing* in the pasture of our old Physician, by which means, Dudley, without being actually put under the restraint of boyhood, which might awaken his suspicions, and lead him to question his rights on the enjoyment of unrestricted liberty, — is, at all times, within my surveillance, and, as you may suppose, not a day passes without our meeting. Robert, and his Spanish servant, Romeri, live with him; but as it is one of my invariable principles never, in any shape whatever, to interfere between master and servant, (rendering the latter a spy upon his employer,) I merely exchange with them a friendly nod, or a passing word of good will, and refrain from either questions or answers to either.

Old Robert the other day asked me as he was sweeping the hearth and put,

ting on fuel, whilst I waited in Dudley's chambers for his return, whether I knew if my son intended to go back to Teneriffe soon ; but I checked him with a remark, that when his master had made up his mind to leave England, I suppose he would be informed. To this I added a little advice respecting his fellow-servant, who, as a young lad in a strange country, might, if not watched by some experienced friend, get into difficulties.

Romeri, at this instant, came into the room hastily, and asked if the Senor was returned. " No," replied Robert, " master went again to Hampton Court soon after you were gone ; and eight-and-twenty miles are not to be galloped over in two hours, especially as he takes as much care of his horses as if they were Christians."

This was the first intelligence to me of Dudley's having any acquaintance in the neighbourhood of London, excepting Lady Alford : he might, however, have formed, at her house at Richmond, some new intimacies unknown to me ; or I concluded he had gone for a morn-

ing-ride. He had not, however, mentioned his intention the night before, or even spoken of that place in my hearing ; and though I could not account for the propriety of my feelings, I felt a sort of vague anxiety and alarm.

Determined not to put it into the power of the servants to suppose me ignorant of my son's proceedings, with which, at his age, I had a right to be made acquainted, I determined to question him when we should again meet. I returned to Cavendish Square — he was expected to dine with us ; but dinner passed and he had not arrived, upon which I communicated what I had heard to Dr. H. who, after a pause that rather increased than diminished my fears, said, “ The red vengeance take the fellow, that he could not keep his promise with the Baronet, and return to Teneriffe ! — I was wrong, I see, in this business — he is not calculated for any profession — it is, after all, a pet canary-bird escaped from its cage, and now at large : our English sparrows, and jays, and tom-tits, and jack-daws, men and

women, will have a pluck at him ; they'll chase him from bush to brier, and over hedges and ditches, to get his pretty *yellow* feathers, and tufted crown of honour, to decorate their murky selves."

This was a true and melancholy picture of what might ensue ; and with undissembled grief, I lamented that Dudley had ever quitted your protection, and that he still delayed returning to it ; for as you well observe, he is not, at this period, to be classed with any of his brothers : his education has been more than secluded, fitted, I allow, to render him blessed and blessing in retirement, but unequal to combat with the world : — his simplicity of character, contrasted with his height, his voice, and appearance, is most remarkable, and even your noble allowance may be the means of increasing his danger. — Had you, my friend, during his stay in England, left him as I wished, solely dependent on me, he would have run a better chance of escaping the snares that may be laid for him ; and so well I am now convinced that he is wholly

unfit to be left to his own guidance, for two or three years at least, that unless he consents to return immediately to Teneriffe, I shall exert my authority over him as a parent; and for the remainder of his minority, either domesticate him with us at Bloomfield, or place him in the family of some other country-parson, as unfashionable as myself.

Dr. H. and I still kept conversing on this one subject of my constant anxiety, when our ideas suddenly met, and he asked me, whether since Dudley's return from the continent, he had been heard to fix any time for going to Euphorbia? I replied in the negative, adding a request to the Doctor, that he would take the privilege of age and friendship to reason with him firmly on that head.

"A pretty sap, that you're afraid to speak to your own puppy!" he replied, "an obstinate young rogue, with his *professions* and promise-breaking: — if I take him in hand, I'll drive him out of all his strong holds and fastnesses, I promise you; — I'll not run round and

round the bush, but give him a long claw at once. If you make a Polonius of me, though," added our old friend, "recollect I write on my forehead seventy-four ; and if this mad ermined judge that is to be, should out with his rapier, and cry ' dead for a ducat,' must you stand by and see fair play."

" For Heaven's sake, my dear sir, say or do what you please," I answered, " only get him out of the way of temptation and danger at once, and blow him over to Euphorbia, *his* only harbour of security and affection. But remember, Doctor," I added, " that when you do begin the attack, you take your *old* snuff-box in hand."

" Ah, that's true," said the Doctor ; " and here it is," taking it out ; " beauty and diamonds are snug in my desk. I wish the fellow would come in at this very moment ; I feel primed to give him a good drubbing — of words."

And, at that instant, we heard a knock at the hall-door ; and, whilst still over our wine, Dudley came in.

" Lost your dinner, you rascal," said

the Doctor, ringing the bell for the servant to bring in a tray; "is this the way you keep an assignation with a turkey, you goose you! Where have you been?"

"Do not order any thing for me, my dear sir," he replied, "for I have dined. I rode over to Hampton Court this morning, on business; and, on my return, called at Richmond, where I took an early dinner with Lady Alford, who, with Captain Cavendish, and the children, have set out for Bath. I waited until they wrote several letters, which they entrusted me to forward immediately to Teneriffe."

"And how are the little sea-urchins?" said the Doctor, who, I saw, was forming his plan of attack. Dudley expatiated, and with feeling, and even emotion, on the mutual and increasing happiness of the lovely Countess and her gallant husband, and on the beauty and growth of their children.

"Why, you speak of wedded life, and its *lively* consequences, *con amore*, my boy," said the Doctor; and then, with a wink at me, added, "Eh! how shall

your reverence like, one of these days, to look in the glass at your ugly phiz, and find yourself a grand-daddy? You see, that none of your girls go off your hands; one of your lads, it is true, has some doubts, whether or not he should like to buy a wedding-coat; but I would lay a pipe of Madeira to a dozen of claret, that this stripling, this Dudley here, will be the first of your family to give you the honours of *grand* paternity."

Dudley blushed; and rising, turned from us, and poured himself out a glass of wine. — "And now, my gay fellow," continued the Doctor, "that you have taken a little fillip, will you answer me one question? When do you mean to return to Euphorbia?"

"When I shall have realised, *by my own exertions and abilities*, five hundred a year," added Dudley, very composedly, placing himself between us at the fire; and taking down a hand-screen, to shade his eyes from the heat and glare of the blazing coals, (one of *your* customs.)

"Realised what!" said the Doctor;

“What’s that? Have the goodness, sir, to repeat those words.”

You have doubtless remarked, that when our old friend condescends to use really *civil* expressions, he is seriously displeased; as, on the other hand, he never utters terms of abuse but when in a good humour, or but to those for whom he feels a friendship.

Dudley was not aware of this trait of his character, or he would have endeavoured to dispel the unpleasant sensation to which his answer and manner had given rise. He, therefore, as he was required, did repeat his words, adding, “Then, and not till then, I shall consider myself entitled to marry. This independence, I allow, is very moderate, particularly in England; but, though humble, it will secure me the privileges of a gentleman, and I desire no more.”

The Doctor looked at me; but as I was resolved not to interfere, I took a newspaper, and, for upwards of an hour, literally amused myself with cross-readings; so disjointed and unconnected was my occupation.

“ And pray, sir,” said the Doctor, “ what may be the foundation on which you design to erect this snug, and *moderate*, and *humble* retreat of five hundred a year? You have, at present, a liberal allowance from your baronet guardian, I grant, which meets all your expenses and enables you to contribute to many of the public charities, such as schools and hospitals, the Blind and other asylums, poor-houses, and alms-houses. You have also, as some of my meddling M. D. friends inform me, a number of weekly pensioners, among the aged, the infirm, and the helpless young brats. You have, as I am told, personally visited most of our prisons, enquired into the cases of debtors, released them, supplied them with a change of clothes, and put them in the way of continuing their labours as artificers, or tradesmen, or handicraft folks. Nay; it has been whispered that you have appropriated a considerable sum to the comforts of lying-in married women; and made a mighty bustle with a regiment of infants

established by your bounty, with good nurses, a few miles from town."

"Yes," said Dudley, with a glow of pleasure, and a smile, whilst again filling his glass, "I *have* done all this; and more, much more: ten times more than you can have any knowledge of, I have performed."

It was evident that there was a latent meaning in his words; of this I felt convinced from his looks, and the knowledge I had of his character, which is modest and unassuming, and as far removed from ostentation as is possible to be. I suppose he felt aware of the false conclusions we might gather from his words, and to his disadvantage, in one particular, for he instantly added, "I have, as you well know, no funds of my own. Where public charities are the question, I am the steward of Sir Eliot; in those of a private nature, I am merely the agent of Claudy. At our last parting, in the garden at Euphorbia, she put into my hands this embroidered pocket-book." He took it from the side-pocket of his coat, and from its outward

case of dark-green silk. — “ Take this to England with you, Dudley,” she said, “ it is full of notes. My father, as you will see, has not been frugal. Take it,—and remember, though an inhabitant of Teneriffe, I am still an English girl ; that I am a native of that most beloved island, from which our resources, our wealth, these very sums are drawn. Take it ; — and let every shilling of this be spent among the poor. Release the debtor, comfort old age, protect the infant, assist the destitute ; imitate, in short, the character of Zelvago ! — I, as a female, cannot follow my own inclinations in this particular, and go about the world doing good, as he does. But you may — you must be my kind steward, and act for me.”

He ceased, replaced his pocket-book in his coat, filled our glasses, and took his in hand, saying, with an air of gallantry and spirit not to be described, “ Pledge me ; here’s to the health of my Claudy, the heiress of Euphorbia.”

I saw perfectly what was passing in the mind of the Doctor ; and was not much surprised, when, after three loud hems, and a furious attack on the fire, he added, “ Clonmore, take away that decanter, or by the vengeance this tipsey dog will finish the contents, and I shall lose my hit at backgammon, for no playing with a varlet when he is half-seas over. — And now that we talk of over-seas,” he added, turning to my son, “ pray let me sail back to the original question, even at the hazard of your making up an account of your answers, and my questions, and sending me a Chancery bill. On what capital, sirrah, do you purpose raising this same 500*l.* a year income? The baronet, as you know, intends at his death, (long life to him!) to leave you half his fortune ; and, in the mean time, allows you a royal income, every shilling of which, it appears, you take pretty good care to spend, in some way or other, according to his own particular desire ; but if you persist in running counter to his wishes, he may yet withdraw his golden hand, and burn his Will. In that

case, let me ask, what becomes of you? As for your father, he can't assist you, having to educate your brothers, to lay by a little to buy husbands for your sisters, and to provide for your mother in case of widowhood. With regard to myself, I *could* assist you, but I *won't*. My nephews and nieces have always looked forward to my *old clothes*, and shall not be disappointed, having conducted themselves as I could wish,— and let me get them through the world by means of bridle, whip, and spur. We considered you, my fortunate buck of the Fortunate Islands, as already provided for; therefore shall treat you as an interloper. Widow Grantley has only her jointure. Lady Alford has married again, and has her own children, who will be very willing, in future, to turn her bank-notes into curling papers, without your assistance; and as for our Spanish Don, — Zulvago, were he even willing to assist you, which, from your ungrateful conduct to his friend Sir Eliot, I much doubt, (and he is the only other person existing that you are acquainted with, who has

it in his power to forward your visionary speculations,) no one knows what is become of him. He may be dead, or in the prisons of the Inquisition, (that *blessed* company being restored.) In short, he appears to have vanished beyond our power of recall; and now, my young sir, I ask, on what foundation may your hopes rest?"

This, you will allow, was using the probe, and to the quick. I was rather apprehensive of the consequences, but feared still more taking it out of skilful hands; wherefore I snuffed the candles, and continued running my eye over debates, and advertisements, lottery puffs, deaths, births, and marriages.

Dudley had risen from his chair some time back, and was now traversing the room, apparently endeavouring, in consideration of the age and personal gratitude due from us all to our worthy Doctor, to check the impetuosity of his temper, and deeply wounded spirit, at this unforeseen attack.

At length he summoned courage to say, "Indeed, sir, this is most extraor-

dinary language ! I owe my existence to my father, and my past and present dependence to Sir Eliot Howard ; but when, may I enquire, did I express the slightest intention of appealing to the bounty of either yourself, or that of the persons you mention ? What claim have I on you, or on Mrs. Grantley, or Lady Alford, or Don Zulvago ? When I apply to them, or to any other person on earth, for pecuniary succour, in any shape whatever, it will be time enough to refuse it me.”

“ There’s a fellow ! ” said the Doctor, turning to me (but I was impenetrable) ; “ There’s a sturdy islander for you ! You ungrateful whelp ! Did not I say, years ago, that you would cause the baronet many a head-ache, and his daughter (pretty little darling !) many a heart-ache ? ”

This touched the gentler feelings of Dudley, and he answered, “ Believe me, Doctor, that both Sir Eliot and his daughter are dearer to me than existence ; and if by the sacrifice of my life, I could promote their happiness — ”

“Hold your tongue, sir — no cant, or I’ve done with you. Suppose I were to say, ‘Dudley, fetch me that chair yonder, to rest my gouty foot upon,’ and you were to answer, ‘Not I, indeed, fetch it yourself; but I’ll jump out of the window to cure your gout.’ Yes, a pretty return you have made to all the kindness of your patron.”

“Patron, sir!” exclaimed my son, suddenly stopping, and turning round fiercely, “I suffer no man to use that word to me! — I have *no* patron, sir: I wish the word were blotted from the language. Sir Eliot is my friend, my guardian, my benefactor, — but not my patron. I never had, I never will have patrons.”

At the very moment that I dreaded the effect these words of this singular, and I fear, eccentric youth, must produce on our old friend, what was my surprise to see him turn over the back of his chair, and with glistening eyes stretch out his hand to Dudley, saying, “You are right—shake hands upon that— I ask your pardon — keep to that

whilst you live; never suffer yourself to come under that worst of slaveries, the servitude of the mind. A vengeance take those words of patron, and patroness, and patronizing, and patronage!" Then turning back to the fire, as Dudley calmly re-seated himself by his side, he added, "Have you read Miss Edgeworth, my boy, on that subject?"

On Dudley's replying in the negative, the Doctor took out his pocket-book, and from it a list of books as long as a college tailor's bill; and having added with a pencil the word "Patronage" to this list, he gave it to Dudley, "There, take that, I observed your book-shelves at your chambers the other day were rather shabby: there is my gift to you, the only one I shall ever make you, dead or alive — three hundred pounds' worth of books, you young dog — who but for me would have been a *ten years' old* skeleton in a coffin by this time. So go to-morrow morning to Longman's, and contrive to empty a little corner in one of his three hundred warehouses. — No debts though — Henry Hase for that.

— Here, you trans-Atlantic young porpoise — here's to pay for them, and something to buy pens and paper, ink and wafers, and sand and sealing-wax."

It was rather comical to observe Dudley, (after all his fine flourishes of independence, and aversion to obligations of any nature,) with evident gratification, slip the note carelessly into his waistcoat-pocket, and eagerly peruse the list of books.

Without one word of thanks or compliments, or grateful professions of any kind, (your own profusion, Howard, has spoilt him,) he added, "I suppose I may change some of these authors for others, according to my own taste and judgment? — I think, my dear sir, you have put down a greater number of law-books than I shall ever have occasion for."

I need not remark with what pleasure I heard this observation; and he continued enumerating the authors on his list.

"Plenty of 'Voyages and Travels,' I see, and with plates. I'm glad of that — Claudy is so fond of travels; 'Bio-

graphy,' that is my choice ; ' Theology,' to please us *all* ; ' Scott's Works,' I shall give those to Mr. Balfour ; ' Southey's,' Don Zulvago is fond of them ; the last editions of the ' Antiquary, Rob Roy,' &c. Sir Eliot's favourites, he shall have those ; the ' Antiquities of Cambridge,' for Mr. Turner ; ' Patriarchal Times,' Claudy and I have read that already in our lonely walks in the forest and vineyards — I shall omit that ; ' Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra,' Lady Alford's favourite, but complains of the vile hard names in it, wishing, that instead of Odenathus, Longinus, &c. the author had substituted Charles, Edward, and Tom * ; ' Byron's Works,' I have most of them by heart ; ' Lallah Rookh !' he repeated with delight, " dear Lallah Rookh !" and he began reciting a part of the ' Fire Worshippers,' with an accent at once correct and tender, when he was interrupted by the Doctor, who told him to hold his prate.

After a moment's silence, (I understood what our physician was upon,) he

* A remark actually made to the author.

asked abruptly, "And when do you go back to Teneriffe, sirrah?"

Dudley hesitated, and in apparent confusion answered, "I think my going back at present would be a great interruption to my studies."

"And what prevents your going on with these same studies at Euphorbia?"

"But, my dear Doctor — my profession, you know."

"The D—l fly off with your profession, sir! bothering all our ears with your profession; when, if the truth is fairly stated, you have no right to exercise any profession at all, not being in want of any. Times are changed when I advised your following one. Silence, you jack-a-napes, and hear me speak: — here is a Baronet, who having adopted you for his co-heir and son-in-law, stalks up to you with an inexhaustible purse in one hand, and a fine girl in the other. Now tell me, what right have you to reject either?"

"I have no intention of rejecting either," replied Dudley; "on the con-

trary, I mean to accept them both." This was said with a *naïveté* really amusing.

" You do, do you? amazing condescension, truly ! Then what have you to do with professions, I ask, and law-books, and chambers, and briefs, and terms, and bands, and gowns ? — Hey ?"

" I wish to obtain a title for Claudy, and that can only be gained by rising to great eminence in some public capacity. Claudy may have the *money*, but I must acquire the *title*."

" Ho ! ho ! are you there ? — And supposing your success complete, how are you certain that Miss Claudy will wait thirty or forty years until you have it in your power to make her a grey-headed baroness ?"

" Thirty or forty years !" repeated Dudley, in amazement.

" Aye, and think yourself very well off too, even by that time, to be able to sit down *up stairs* * with the key of your strong box in your pocket, wherein are deposited the vouchers of a few tens of thousands."

* The House of Lords.

“ But surely, my dear sir, in a much shorter period than that, in eight years say, by industry, and merit, and abilities, and principle, and economy —”

“ Yes, you know much of economy,” said the Doctor, “ all your life squirting pine-apple juice from your mouth; munching olives, and rinsing your claret bumper glasses in port wine ! Yes, you can prate of economy, and you will tell me next, I suppose, that should the Baronet withdraw his present shield of competence, you can wrestle with poverty, and fight your way through the hostile world of society. And so, my lad, you can reconcile yourself to wait eight years ! can you ? the most patient lover I ever heard or read of ! other fellows in these cases need the curb, but faith you require the spur ; to tell you the truth, I don’t think you are in love with Claudy at all.”

“ No ! — why, sir, you might as well say Claudy is not in love with me !” The gravity with which this remark was uttered was so irresistibly comic, that it fairly conquered mine ; and laying down the paper, I said to the Doctor,

“ If Dudley has no love to boast of, we cannot acquit him of want of vanity ;” and turning, I closed with them round the fire.

“ Besides,” remarked my son, “ I am certain of getting forward, if not in the noble profession of the law, in the diplomatic line. Although Sir Eliot has refused to interfere in these concerns of mine, as I wished and requested him, I shall certainly contrive to get into parliament ; and fortune, fame, rank, and honours, attend the career of a senator. And then I’ll marry Claudy :—it is very fortunate for us both that my education has been so liberal and so perfect.”

“ Plague of your education, you blockhead !” said the Doctor, “ if I can see what one good purpose it has answered, but to enable you to make a fool of yourself !— Ah, my fine lad, I see how it will end, treading in the steps of that Spaniard, that Zulvago — Hernandez, what do you call him ; whose one false step in life has made him what he is (though as capital a fellow as ever smoked a cigar) ; yet you see what he has

brought himself to — he played with *mousey* till he lost it ; he mounted his romantic *hobby-mule*, as you are doing now, and broke the heart of a fond believing girl, (without, however, killing her, the more the pity;) and yet he vowed by St. Isidro, the patron saint of old Madrid, (we'll allow a *city* to have a patron,) that he loved the girl he forsook, and his conduct has proved he did. Yet you see what he has turned out — instead at this hour of being a good husband and father, and a happy citizen of Spain, there has he been wandering ever since his twenty-sixth year, little better than a moody, melancholy, whistling, sighing, crack-brained ——”

A loud and thundering coachman's rap at the street-door cut short the Doctor's long sermon ; and in the midst of our suspense, as to who could be the visitor at so unusual an hour, for we were just going to tea, the door of the room was thrown open by a servant, who announced — “ Don Zulvago d'Almeida.”

Acquainted as you are, my friend, with all the parties, you may conceive what was our reception of this noble Spaniard, this most excellent man; who, after so long an absence, was thus restored to us at the moment that we had thought him lost for ever. But you can have only a faint idea of the surprise and admiration with which he almost gazed upon Dudley! — it was some time before he could be persuaded of his identity, such is the change from the mere boy to the full-grown youth. — When perfectly convinced, he made every minute enquiry concerning your welfare, and all your connections; by which, we understood, he had not been at Euphorbia lately, and he expressed much pleasure on the subject of Lady Alford's marriage.

Having answered unreservedly all our questions, and he was far more inquisitive than I considered consistent with his nature, we, in return, enquired of him how time had flown since his communication to you, which we observed contained the account of Miss

Shelburne's approaching marriage with a Colonel Hamilton.

He was for a short time silent ; and being by this led to take further notice of him, I perceived, on his taking off his great coat, that he was in mourning.

He saw our eyes glancing at his dress, and seemed to be thankful for the delicacy which prompted us to restrain our curiosity to looks ; and, shortly after, as if to make us amends for the state of suspense we evidently endured, he spoke with the most unreserved frankness : " It is Colonel Hamilton who is dead," he said. " Perhaps you concluded that I was in mourning for the lady of whom you have heard *and read* so much ; for I take it for granted," looking at the Doctor, " that you, Sir, as well as Mr. Clonmore, are acquainted with the subject of a narrative which I drew up of my early years, and sent to Sir Eliot Howard." The Doctor replied that he was, when I remarked that we had not presumed to show it to a third person, (my wife excepted,) and that consequently it had never been seen by Dudley.

My son upon this with much propriety rose, and with a smile, shaking hands with Zulvago, took up his hat, bidding the Doctor good-night, for that he had promised a fellow-student to accompany him to the theatre, and that he hoped to be in time for the last act of Miss O'Neil's charming Juliet, or at any rate, his favourite Miss Stephens in Artaxerxes. I did not attempt to detain him, though, had it not been for Zulvago's arrival, I should certainly, *for more reasons than one*, have made a third in this theatrical excursion; and the Doctor called out as he shut the door and ran down stairs, —
“Hollo! you sir! come back; if you fail to breakfast with me to-morrow, I'll send a Bow-street-runner after you.”

We then had a long and serious conversation with Zulvago, who informed us, what I must sum up in few words — the marriage of Victorina with Colonel Hamilton — their embarkation for Europe — the Colonel's illness and death

at the Cape of Good Hope — and the arrival at Portsmouth of his widow with the body, which, by his directions, is to be buried in Hampton churchyard. Thus far his communication. His next enquiry was to me, “Have you ever had any tidings of Mrs. Shelburne?” — “Never,” I replied, “though nothing on my part has been left undone in pursuance of your wishes.” Then he said, “I have at last obtained the clue; immediately after Victorina’s marriage, she communicated to me that her mother had, on her own departure for India, retired to a cottage (her own being destroyed) in the neighbourhood of Aranjuez, where she had lived ever since under another name, having no other communication with England than to receive the annuity settled upon her by her daughter; the funds of which were long since withdrawn from the Bank of England and made payable at the private bank of ——— and Co.”

“Good heavens!” I exclaimed, “that house failed five or six years back. If

reliance on that bank was the only means of support which Mrs. Shelburne possessed, I much fear she must have suffered some inconvenience from its insolvency."

Zulvago looked considerably alarmed, and replied, "that *was* her only support — her daughter has been as open and candid with me since her own change of fortune, as she was previously perverse and reserved; and I can safely protest that the mother had no other means of subsistence, (except what might arise from actual labour,) than that annuity of a hundred pound, being one-half of Victorina's salary. As that bank failed in which the money was deposited for her use until her daughter's return from India, at the time you mention, Gabrielle may have been exposed to actual want, for, excepting her child and myself, such have been the hardships to which her early years were subjected, and the retirement in which they lived, she has no other friend on earth."

"And where is this Mrs. — what's her name? now?" enquired the Doctor,

“ Mrs. Hamilton ? ” — “ At Portsmouth, in which place I left her a few hours since, having never lost sight of her since we quitted Calcutta. Had it pleased Heaven to spare the Colonel’s life, they would have been happy — his love for her daily increased, and she was his constant cheerful companion whilst health remained, and his attentive and affectionate nurse during a long and painful illness.”

“ And what made you leave her at Portsmouth,” said the Doctor, “ instead of accompanying her to the place where the Colonel is to be buried ? — You will pardon the liberty of an old fellow, Don Zelvago, — it appears to me, that having travelled thus far together in company, you need not have left her at a time when she must stand in need of most assistance.”

“ Very true,” replied the Spaniard, “ but by the last letters received from Mrs. Shelburne, it appears she some time back quitted Spain for England, and that she is most probably still in London.” He took a card from his pocket,

“ Here is her address, dated about eight months since : No. — Swallow-street, Oxford Road ; as you may now conclude, I am sent forward by Mrs. Hamilton to prepare her mother for the joyful news of her daughter’s wealthy marriage and return to England.”

“ And have you been to Swallow-street,” I asked.

“ No ; I only arrived in town about an hour since, and came directly here. Night was not a proper time to intrude upon Donna Sobrino ; I shall go thither to-morrow ; you can inform me in what part of London is this street ?”

“ If you will allow me,” I said, “ I will accompany you to-morrow ;” for I guessed that the Spaniard, from his ignorance of London, could have no suspicion that Mrs. Shelburne would, from the very direction, be found in a state of obscurity, perhaps of the most abject penury.

He neither declined or accepted my offer, and then, as I could perceive, willing to turn the conversation from his

still fondly-remembered Gabrielle, he spoke of Mrs. Hamilton. Although he praised her conduct in the warmest terms, both before marriage and since, he took notice, (as if expecting that hereafter some acquaintance might arise between her and us, especially if it should be her design to settle in England); "Her character is not a common one—it is violent, impetuous, enthusiastic; she in this resembles her father Sobrino; her passions are under little restraint; and it is well that she has none of a still more dangerous tendency than those I mention, her strongest being that of love to her mother; but this in itself is carried to excess; for it supersedes her duty to her Maker."

He paused, as if his mind dwelt on some painful recollection, "but I trust," he continued, "that her errors, arising from an unbridled vehemence of imagination, and bitterness of spirit, may yet be softened down; and that now she is in possession of the blessings of wealth, pride and tenacity will wear away, leav-

ing behind them the amiable qualities of sensibility and filial love."

"Is her health good? has it suffered by the climate of India?" enquired the Doctor. "No," said Zulvago, "it is invariably excellent. When I left her at Portsmouth she had a cold, it is true, but it was very slight; and as her journey from thence must be necessarily slow, (for she persists in attending the funeral, and never quitting the body until it is deposited in earth at the place he mentions in his will,) travelling can do her no injury. Besides, after I shall have had one interview with her mother, I intend returning, to accompany her myself to the burial-ground at Hampton."

Here our conversation ceased, and we separated for the night, Zulvago having promised the Doctor to breakfast with him the next morning.

I had written thus far, and on the very morning I speak of! since which period a fortnight has elapsed! — Good God,

to what a scene we have since that hour been witness ! Dudley will communicate the particulars to you — I have not the power.

Yours ever,
HENRY CLONMORE.

LETTER LVIII.

Dudley Clonmore to Sir Eliot Howard.

Bloomfield Rectory.

MY dear Sir Eliot, my own friend !
What have I not of late gone through ?
To what dreadful trials have not my
feelings been put ! What agony of
mind have I not suffered for the last ten
days. I endeavour to close my eyes, and
shut out *that* scene, but it has laid fast
hold on my imagination, and I feel like
a scared bird, all horror and alarm. — Oh
that I were but safe in the protection of
Euphorbia, that I could for ever quit a
world that can thus frighten me, a world
containing such anguish, such misery.

My father has informed me how far he
had made you acquainted with our pro-
ceedings, and I now resume from the

morning, when at Doctor H.'s invitation I went about ten o'clock to Cavendish Square. Don Zulvago, whom he had also engaged to breakfast with him, had not arrived: we began, but had not concluded our meal when he was announced. How unlike the Zulvago of the preceding evening!—then, he appeared the image of restored happiness, or at least of hope—now, the very picture of calm and settled despair.

He sat down, and looking stedfastly at my father, said, “She is not to be found.”

“Then you *have* been already to Swallow-street?”

“Yes, I could not rest, I could not wait for you to accompany me. I rose at seven this morning, and by means of a hackney chariot enquired the place.”

“Well?”

“I found it—she has been living in that one spot, and for the last few years has practised what may perhaps be called a pious fraud upon her daughter, to keep *her* mind at peace. She did go to Aranjuez, intending there to live until Victorina's return; but without funds there is

no more possibility of living in Spain than elsewhere. On the failure of the bank, and her remittances from London stopping, she came to England, and has, from that period, inhabited two wretched rooms in the miserable and forlorn habitation to which I was directed. How widely different to my expectations! (for I expected in proportion to my hopes.) It appears that she had once rented other apartments in the house, having supported herself by needlework, glad to secure the shelter of a home, at once honest and reputable, and the services of its poor but worthy owner, (from whom I had all these particulars.) From illness and various disappointments, of which those subject to them are the best judges, she felt obliged to give up these rooms and gradually ascend from bad to worse, until she was forced, at last, to feel grateful for the shelter of a garret."

"And she is dead, then?" said my father, compassionately.

"No," said Zuluaga, "not that we know of; but she is lost. A week since

she left her home to take some needle-work she had finished to a person who lived a few miles out of town, (the woman did not know the name of the place,) and has not since returned, or been heard of. I fear the worst. Want, misery, complete abandonment, utter despair may have led her to—" and he rose to conceal his agony.

"Why I don't know what to say to it," said the Doctor; "but you have no certainty that she is dead; and doubt implies hope."

My father appeared as if he wished to give consolation, but knew not in what shape; whilst I, from my youth, and ignorance of the whole of the subject, (though I guessed much of the real business,) sat silent.

"What would *you* advise, Doctor?" enquired my father. "Perhaps were I to go to a coffee-house where they file the newspapers, I might, on looking over them for the last week, find some clue among the accidents or casualties; for it is in vain to endeavour to delude a man of our friend Don Zulvago's strength

of mind. Mrs. Shelburne, in my opinion, is no more; and I rest upon the very circumstance of her having placed so much confidence in the woman with whom she lodged. She would not have changed her abode without acquainting this person, whom it appears she liked, and without assigning some cause for her removal. Had any accident happened short of death, she would have written, or sent to her landlady. You did not, I suppose, go into the apartments which Mrs. Shelburne had occupied?"

"I did," replied Zúlvago, "I took pleasure in so doing; it was to me the very luxury of grief and remorse. There I saw her work, her books, and other trifles, all scattered in that careless yet decided manner, that, at one glance, acquaints us the owner has only left the room for a short time for a walk, or to go into another apartment. I took up the work in my hand; I examined the books, many in the Spanish language; and in all her name, or that of her daughter, was written. In one, a volume of Lopez de Vega, was my own name,

and written by myself upwards of seven-and-twenty years since, and dated from the cottage of Engelhardt, at Aranjuez. I found also an Atlas, which I knew to have belonged to her father, Gustavus ; and on a narrower inspection of this sordid and wretched chamber, I saw in one corner a spinning-wheel, and near it a German clock, over which were arranged, upon a shelf, half-a-dozen of the well-remembered flower-vases. I knew them all. I looked at them ; and handled them with a mixture of interest and sorrow, which at last gave way to the most agonizing fears, that their owner, at the moment of being restored to her daughter, and to the blessings of riches and society, and perhaps to me, was lost to all for ever.

“ I renewed my enquiries of the woman, but she had already told me all she knew, and could add nothing. I am positive that she is no more. From certain pecuniary circumstances, mentioned by this person, I am convinced she has become the victim of hopeless poverty and despair ; for though she might na-

turally have expected her daughter's speedy return to England, (the term of her service to Lady L—— being expired,) we, who are in possession of treasures never exhausted, can form but little idea of that horrible sensation that seizes on the mind of the person, who, compelled to earn their daily bread, find, at an instant, the resources stopped, even for four-and-twenty hours. I repeat, I am certain she is dead. Gabrielle is dead, and my life has, with her existence, lost its main-spring."

I, my dear friend, had, as you may judge, hitherto kept silent; but at that word, — I allude to the word "*Gabrielle*," which I do not recollect ever to have heard you, or my father, or even Don Zulvago himself, until that hour, pronounce, — I started up, and, with a feeling that nearly bordered on distraction, exclaimed, "*Gabrielle! Did you say Gabrielle?*" — and every eye in the room was fixed on me. "Speak, sir," I continued; "it is no common name, at

least in England. Is the name of Mrs. Shelburne, Gabrielle?"

"It is," he replied.

"But," I added, fearful of giving rise to hopes that might be dashed to the ground the moment of forming them; "but, — may I ask, was not the lady whom you wished, when young, to marry, a Spaniard? consequently dark; her hair and eyes equally black: at least such have ever been the Spanish females I have seen; — and I, until now, understood that it was to a native of Spain to whom you were early attached."

"No," said Zulvago, summoning all his fortitude, to bear what I had next to say; "Gabrielle was a native of Saxony; her mother an Englishwoman. Recollect yourself, Dudley," he added; "you have seen this picture before;" and he took from his pocket a miniature, hung by a black ribbon, which I immediately recollected.

"Yes," I said, "I have: it was at Euphorbia. You and I were fencing at the time;" and I looked attentively at the picture; and then, with sorrow and

doubt, said, " I can trace no resemblance, although the person to whom I allude has light eyes, and is very pale ; and, indeed, fair, although far advanced in years. No ; this can never have been designed for her." I paused ; and then added, " What was her maiden name ? and that of her husband ?" for I was still unwilling to give up every hope.

" Engelhardt—Gabrielle Engelhardt ;" he replied, " and she was married to a Spanish West Indian, of the name of Manuel de Sobrino."

Judge, oh my dearest friend, of my emotions at that instant ! Tears, tears of joy almost rushed to my eyes. A man ought not to weep ; but I could scarcely restrain my tears, when I grasped the hand of Zulvago, and said, " She lives ! She *does* live ! Four-and-twenty hours are not past since I saw her, — since I spoke with her."

Under what strange appearances does joy often show itself ! My interest in her life or death, compared to that of our Spanish friend, was trifling, yet I was all rapture ; my voice, my face, my

actions, expressive of unbounded pleasure, at having converted the despair of this worthy man into happiness (a transformation he has been the means of to hundreds of his fellow-creatures). His sensations must have been, at this moment, exquisite, far exceeding mine; and yet he continued speechless, and indeed immoveable, as if oppressed by a sudden weight; and incapable of the smallest exertion.

My father spoke, and the Doctor spoke, but Zulvago did not open his lips; and I briefly acquainted them, that about a week since, on my return late in the evening, on horseback, from Esher, having, with others, been to see Claremont,) I had been the means of saving a female from the hands of a ruffian footpad, in a dreary part of the road, near Hampton Court; but not before he had contrived to rob her of a bundle, which, as she informed me, contained needlework she was taking home. I gave my horse to Romeri, and desired him to ride back to the inn we had just passed, and send a chaise to meet me, at the same

time enquiring of the female whither she was going, that I might conduct her thither in safety. She had scarcely time to inform me that she was going to Hampton Court, when the villain made another desperate attack, during which he fired a pistol, and disappeared over a hedge. He had wounded the woman in the shoulder, though very slightly. The alarm was, however, sufficient to deprive her of her senses. The chaise arrived, but it would have been madness to think of removing her to any distance, without surgical aid. She was taken into the inn, and proper assistance sent for ; and a fever, though slight, I greatly fear as much the consequence of anxiety of mind, and want of proper sustenance, was the consequence.

“ But why,” remarked my father, “ did you not, on your return to town, relieve the anxiety of her landlady, as to the safety of her lodger ?”

“ Because,” I replied, “ for a reason I could not then account for, the female concealed from me the place of her abode, and her name, adding, her con-

finement could be of no long duration, when she should return thither. On perceiving my wish to discover who she was, and where she lived, although she had written to the mistress of the house in town, she burned the letter before my face, and would not, after that, even hazard sending to the post by the servants of the inn. With the warmest expressions of gratitude to me for my trifling services, she, however, asked me for my card of address, adding, the time for acknowledging her *pecuniary* debts might be distant, but it would certainly come: those of *kindness*, she added, she could never repay. I gave her my card, as required, expecting through that means I might be enabled hereafter to trace her; for from that hour, understanding from herself that she was a widow, and in years, and that she maintained herself by honest industry, I put her down, in my own mind, on the list of Claudy's pensioners."

"And where is Mrs. Shelburne now? and how came you to know her name?" enquired the Doctor.

I replied, that she was still at the inn at Hampton Court; and that I had gained the knowledge of her name from the accidental sight of a small pocket Latin and English prayer-book of hers, which I found one morning on the table; before she could take it from me, I had read in a blank leaf these words, “ Gabrielle Engelhardt: married” (I forget the date) “ to Manuel de Sobrino, late of St. Domingo, now of Madrid.”

After this most circumstantial detail, my friend, you may easily imagine what followed. The Doctor having ordered his chariot, advised Zulvago, and my father, to proceed in it immediately to Hampton Court, to which place I, with Romeri, rode on horseback on before, that I might prepare Mrs. Shelburne for the coming of her friend; whilst Dr. H—— took upon himself to call in Swallow-street, and set the good woman’s mind at ease respecting the fate of her lodger, and present place of abode.

On arriving at the inn, I found Mrs. Shelburne calm, and more cheerful than usual. Change of air, rest, and generous nourishment, had so greatly improved her personal appearance, that, at this interview, I was enabled to form a more correct judgment with respect to her real time of life, and found that she was not so very far advanced in years as I had represented to Zulvago, being at this time about four or five-and-forty. — Her dress, not that of a widow, although black and close, set off her fair complexion, and light hair and eyes, to great advantage; and the expression of her face being most charming, though dejected, I then, for the first time, saw the strong resemblance between her and Lady Alford. “Did Mrs. Shelburne possess the blooming cheeks and lips, and look of enchanting vivacity, which distinguish the Countess,” thought I, “here is equal regularity of features, beauty of expression, dignity of manners, (though Lady Alford is much taller of the two,) sweetness of voice, and grace of motion.”

After the usual enquiries upon the state of her health that morning, (and as she ever received me with the affectionate unreserve of a mother, I felt for her the respect of a son,) she said, "You perhaps, young gentleman, blame the mystery under which I conceal from you both my name and residence in town; and the request I have made you that you will not mention to your friends what has happened; but the day is not distant" (she alluded, I imagine, to the return of her daughter) "when you shall know both, and you will then find you have afforded your assistance to one whom you need not blush to own as an acquaintance. In the mean while I trust in the promise given me, that you will wait my own hour, and neither seek to know my name, or to follow or trace me to my dwelling in London. I shall return thither this evening by one of the stages which pass the door; and having your card, you may depend on hearing from me at some future time."

You know best, my dear Sir Eliot, whether I am capable of carrying on, even for five minutes, a plan of deception, however innocent the purpose. As I did not answer this address, she looked stedfastly at me, and I felt myself blush. "Then, sir, you have broken your promise with me!" she said — "You have already, by some contrivance, learned my name; you have found out my abode of wretchedness, which duty and proper pride (and other circumstances not worthy to mention to one so young) made me wish to conceal. — You have been to that retreat where, hidden from the world, I have passed the last few years of my life, labouring for subsistence. Your countenance promised truth, and I relied on the expression it wears of nobleness and innocence, and on the solemn promise you gave me — but I was born to be the victim of my own credulity — I was born to be deceived!" and she sighed bitterly. "No, madam," I answered; "No, Mrs. Shelburne, I have not deceived you: I neither enquired your name nor have I been to your lodgings in the

house you speak of.” — “ And yet you know my name !” she answered with increased wonder, looking fixedly at me with the dignity her years allowed, whilst I, with the awkward timidity natural to mine, shrunk from her look. There was no time to be lost.—I went to the window, and gave the preconcerted signal, unseen by her, to Romeri, who was on the green below. He disappeared, and I turned once more to speak to Mrs. Shelburne, who sat trembling and in alarm, at some inward apprehension. Suddenly addressing me, she said, “ As it appears you know my name, and perhaps still more of me than I am aware of, you may have heard I have a daughter in India ?”

I smiled, and with a look expressive of all I wished her to understand, replied, “ At this moment, madam, you have a daughter in *England*.” She heard no more ; she concealed her face in her hands, and fell upon her knees. “ My God ! My God ! I thank thee !” she cried, but with so soft a voice, so gentle an expression, and slow a movement,

that I felt as if in the presence of a worshipping angel. — “ And you have seen her ? ” she continued, slowly rising and drawing near me ; “ and you bring me letters from my Victorina ! — My child ! — Where, where is she now ? ” — “ She is at Portsmouth, on her way to town,” I replied, “ but *I* bring no letters to you. *I* have not seen her. It is not *I*, Donna Sobrino, who can speak to you of your daughter.” She trembled, and turned pale, saying, as she sat down and looked steadily at me, “ Then who is it ? Who can ” — The door opened, and Zulvago was at her side ; — his face was concealed on her knee. With hands raised, and eyes expressive of all that was passing in her heart, Mrs. Shelburne looked down upon him. I instantly quitted the room, and joined my father in a parlour below.

Hitherto, my dearest friend, all is smooth, and full of hope and comfort, and peace and sunshine. — Now prepare, prepare your heart for sudden darkness, for

the storm, for the thunderbolt : — it fell, and at once scattered instant destruction around. — I am interrupted, and will write again in a few days; in the mean time I am ever yours,

DUDLEY CLONMORE.

LETTER LIX.

Dudley Clonmore to Sir Eliot Howard.

I RESUME the subject of my last letter. — It was, as you may suppose, some hours before either my father or myself ventured to intrude on our long separated but now mutually restored friends; nor should we at all, had we not at the moment of thinking of returning to town, for it got late, received a message from Don Zulvago, requesting to see us both, above stairs, and in the presence of Mrs. Shelburne.

We went. Neither of them appeared as if they had stirred from the places where I had left them. The lady sat in the same spot, and Don Zulvago was still at her side, and, as was consistent with their time of life, engaged with her in calm and serious conversation. We were introduced by him to her regularly by name, and she to us, but no longer as

Mrs. Shelburne — “ Donna Gabrielle de Sobrino,” said our friend, presenting her, and we at once fell into easy and familiar discourse, which by degrees turned even upon indifferent subjects, during which she indiscriminately addressed him as Isidore and Carlos. Future arrangements were, however, spoken of; and it was decided that the lady should return the same evening in the chariot to Cavendish-square, where she was promised a hearty welcome by my father, in the name of our worthy physician; whilst I was commissioned to go to Swallow-street to the good landlady, and promise that her lodger would call upon her the next day; Zulvago, in the mean time, without returning to town, was to proceed direct from Hampton Court, and strike into the Portsmouth road, to join Mrs. Hamilton and the funeral procession, which we supposed might by this time have begun its route.

Thus were we situated, the hearts of all full of security and joy, (for it was ap-

parent what would be Zulvago's happy fate,) so great had been the change produced in Donna Sobrino by the account of her daughter's marriage and return to England; (Mrs. Hamilton's widowhood being slightly mentioned, though the Colonel's memory was spoken of with affection by him, and with regret by her). — Thus, my friend, were we situated; lights, tea, and coffee, having been ordered — the lady and Zulvago (the one still so handsome and the other ever grand and noble) at her side, occupying the sofa, and my father and I opposite, conversing with them and with each other in that quiet sort of calm and social ease, the effect of perfect and unalloyed happiness: — a calm, indeed, the forerunner of a storm! when a great and universal bustle was heard below; but as these things are not unusual at an inn, they did not give us that disturbance which they would at a private house, and we continued our conversation.

The noise increased, however, to so alarming a degree, and seemed to approach so near the room we occupied,

that Zulvago and my father rose at the same moment to enquire the cause ; but before they could leave the room, a loud trampling of feet from without was followed by the door being thrown widely open, when in rushed a female in mourning. —

For a moment she stood in the middle of the room, looking slowly around ; then, with uplifted hands, she said, “ I was told she was here ! ” uttered a piercing shriek, and rushed into the arms of Donna Sobrino. — I need not inform you that this was Mrs. Hamilton ; but unless I describe, you cannot have the slightest idea of the spectre-like apparition under which she presented herself : — her tall stature ; her majestic features ; her stern look ; the dead-white complexion ; the dark and frowning eye-brows ; the large and brilliant eyes of black, thrown wildly round the room, whilst with one hand she still shaded the light from her face ; — her disordered dress ; — her hurried step ; — her trembling limbs ! — It was, to me at least, accustomed from my birth to no other objects than peace and love, a sight of horror. I can only

compare her appearance to that of a person who had been buried alive ; and who having broken open the funeral vault, might rush again among her friends to light and life. — The image of Juliet suggested this idea, I allow ; but here was not to be traced either the consummate beauty, or early youth, the softness, or angelic sweetness of a Juliet ! — here all was grandeur, defiance, pride, menace, and the sternest majesty.

You will naturally conclude that Mrs. Hamilton had accompanied the funeral procession hither ; and that, consequently, her arrival at this inn was, though sooner than had been expected by two or three days, not so much the cause of wonder ; but you are mistaken ; — she had, as we afterwards learned from an Indian female servant, the sole attendant of her journey, although not recovered of her illness, quitted Portsmouth with the hearse and mourning coaches ; but from whatever cause was not then understood, in proportion to the slowness of the pro-

cession, her anxiety to get forward increased, until that feeling arose to painful eagerness, and eagerness to a state of irritation little short of delirium.

At the last stage but two, that of Haslemere, she had retired to rest the night before, apparently calm. About six o'clock in the morning she had started from her bed, dressed herself with desperate speed, and without acquainting her English servants, who had hitherto forced her to be careful of herself, and not hurry the procession at the expense of her own health (for the fever attending her cold had scarcely left her), she dragged this old Indian female out of her sleep, saying, "I shall be late — come, come along, come ;" and ordered a chaise and four to be prepared. Most of her people were of course not risen, and those that were, obeyed her orders, ignorant of the true state of her mind.

During her journey to town, which was one rapid whirl, she literally scattered the roads with money — throwing it to the post boys and turnpike men as she went, repeating, "I shall be too

late." They supposing she was on her way to see a dying relative, forwarded her journey with every assistance in their power.

On arriving in Swallow-street, she found Mrs. Shelburne no longer there; but Dr. H—— having in the mean time called on the mistress of the house, Mrs. Hamilton learned from her her mother's address,—when stepping again into the chaise, she hurried on the post boys, and they the horses to their utmost speed, — uttering still as she travelled, the awful and mysterious words of, "I shall be too late."

Don Zulvago was the only one of the party cool and collected enough to determine how to act. My father and I were both equally struck with surprise and terror at this apparition, whilst Donna Sobrino wholly engrossed by the full happiness that she, once more after so long an absence, held her child in her arms, seemed incapable of making any remarks on the strange and wild circumstances that attended her appearance.

With a sort of ghastly smile, the

daughter having passionately and repeatedly embraced her mother, looked up and round at us, giving each a familiar nod, and then bursting into a smothered laugh said, "I have run a race with death, and have out-stripped him." It was natural to suppose she alluded to her having accompanied, on its journey, the dead body of her husband, but to our sudden amazement, and indeed horror, she soon undeceived us.

You remember, my dear friend, Lewis's ballad of the Earl King — the child dying of a fever in his father's arms, during his return home through the forest, — at this hour we saw the subject of that ballad realised, and in its most awful form.

"Yes," she continued, throwing around her the glance of madness, "I have won the race, he thought he had mastered me on our landing, but I wrestled with him : he thought to detain me from you, but I escaped, he could not hold me."

"Of whom are you speaking, my love?" enquired her mother : "who could have

had the cruelty to try and prevent our meeting?"

"*Death*," said the daughter, turning round with horrid slowness of motion, and fixing her dreadful eyes upon her mother.

We could then perceive that the latter began to discover symptoms of alarm:—as if no longer able to endure the piercing gaze of Victorina, she gently retreated, looking in speechless appeal to Zulvago.—He had been, for the last five minutes, engaged in writing at a distant table, and now approaching me said, "Allow me to send your servant Romeri to town with these letters,—one to the Spanish Chapel, in Manchester Square,—the other to my friend Doctor B.—let him spare neither money or speed, and on no account return without the persons for whom I have written,—they must leave London instantly, and may be here in the course of a few hours."

I quitted the room with the letters to seek Romeri, and my father was following me, observing that the presence of

strangers was at such a time improper ; when Zulvago caught his arm, saying, “ We shall have need of you — this is the hour to prove your friendship to me ; — and Dudley, when you have dispatched your servant, return hither instantly.”

“ But,” observed my father, “ at the first meeting of a mother and a daughter, particularly as that daughter is evidently indisposed — is it exactly right thus to intrude upon them ? — Had not Dudley and I better return to town and come again to-morrow, when the ladies may be better able to see us ?

The look of Zulvago in reply was the most expressive I had ever witnessed : it went full to the heart, as he replied, “ Is it possible, Mr. Clonmore, you can be so deceived ? do you not see she is dying ?”

“ Dying,” repeated my father, “ which of them ? not the mother ?”

“ No, no,” he replied, “ the daughter, — I have seen more of death than you, — by to-morrow’s sun, Victorina (at least thus I fear) will be no more.”

Then seeing I still lingered, he added, "Not a moment, if we would save her, is to be lost,—send to town for the persons I have summoned, and in the mean while do you, Mr. Clonmore, enquire of the master of the inn, whether, in case we should be pressed for time, the neighbourhood of this place can furnish us with good, or indeed any medical advice, and above all a Catholic clergyman."

Having dispatched Romeri, and executed Zulfago's directions, my father and I returned to the room, where we found Victorina still seated on the sofa by Donna Sobrino, on whose shoulder her head rested; whilst her breath, quick and irregular, seemed drawn with increased difficulty.

"She seems very ill," remarked the mother, as she held her hand, and looked up to Zulfago. "Had she not better be removed to bed, and endeavour to rest after her journey, which appears to have been conducted with a haste equally imprudent and unnecessary?" and as she spoke she glanced at the situation of

her daughter, which, until that moment, we had not observed.

“Remain quiet, my dear Gabrielle,” said Zulvago in reply, “still keep her hand in yours, and do not attempt to separate from her;—the least motion to that effect may be productive of danger.”

Thus were we situated, when after a slight convulsion, Mrs. Hamilton raised herself, and leaned back on a cushion placed by Zulvago,—she looked up as with habitual courtesy to thank him, when her eyes became fixed in a horrid stare upon his countenance,—clinging to her mother she said,

“I have seen that face before!—when was it,—it is, it is, the same!—that Isidore!—it is the face of him who destroyed my mother’s peace!—the wretch, the base, the cowardly, the vile seducer of a girl’s affections;”—another pause ensued, when addressing him she added, “Look at me, Sir, look at me, and say, are you not that monster,—you are, you are, the cruel cause of all our

misfortunes ; — you knew my mother loved you, you were conscious you loved her ; — nor duty, nor parents, nor any one impediment on earth existed to prevent your union, and yet you betrayed her. Now, Sir, tell me, and tell me at once, why did not you marry her ?”

This address, strange and alarming as it was, caused not the slightest alteration in the countenance or manner of Zulvago, who had his eyes fixed intently as it appeared, more upon her hands than upon her face ; whilst Donna Sobrino, all consternation and grief at her conduct said, “ My child, what is all this ! — surely you have forgotten our past sorrows, or how can you enjoy the blessings for which, thanks to God, we have exchanged them ? — Don Isidore and I are now friends, — when in India, and on your passage homeward, he has proved himself to be yours ; and I hope that our renewed friendship will not cease but with life ;” and, as she spoke, she held out her hand to Zulvago, who, im-

moveable as a statue, did not even attempt to take it.

“Do not touch him!” shrieked the daughter, snatching back the hand of her mother, with painful violence. “Touch him not! He did not *murder* your father, it is true; but he was the cause that murder was committed. Had that man, Don Isidore, married you, would you, my precious mother, have lost, by dreadful and premature means, that father of yours, so much, so deservedly beloved.”

An expression of dread and astonishment appeared now in the face of Donna Sobrino, when, recovering herself, she attempted to rise, saying to Zulvago, and looking at my father and me, who sat in a dark and distant part of the room, “She is deranged. This is delirium. Her hand burns mine as I hold it. She is in a fever; — this is madness. — For Heaven’s sake, gentlemen,” addressing us, “leave the room.”

We felt inclined to obey, and were rising for that purpose, when Zulvago, without stirring from his chair, or indeed

turning his head, said aloud, " Remain where you are, at least until the arrival of a medical man. Manual force may presently be necessary, when your assistance, in preference to that of the master, or the waiters of the inn, may be required."

This decided us ; and my father addressing me in a low voice, for he saw what I suffered, exhorted me to rally my fortitude, and meet the event with manliness and good sense, adding, that he had need of all his, for that, though at his time of life, and in his clerical function, he had, of course, frequently attended the bed of death, this was a scene of which he could form, from experience, no idea.

In the mean time, the situation of Donna Sobrino became most pitiable. The last words of Zulvago explained to her the peril that threatened her daughter, as he designed it should, and in compliance with his directions not to attempt to persuade her even to move

from that room, she continued in a state of the most painful suspense. Mrs. Hamilton had one of her hands still grasped in hers, while her other arm was past round the waist of her mother.

The chain of Victorina's ideas was not as yet broken, and she continued viewing Zulvago with suspicion and abhorrence. — Shortly after, the scene appeared to shift in her imagination; and springing from the sofa, she fell upon the neck of Zulvago, saying, "My father! Sobrino! My poor unhappy father!" and rising, added, one hand resting on his shoulder, "Did I not say that the blow was accidental? It struck him, it is true; it struck my grandfather to the ground, and he was stunned, and he bled, and he lingered; but he was silent, and he died. *I* have been silent also; though a child, I was silent. I saw the blow, unseen by any; but I never spoke of it. Did I, my mother? No, never. So look up, dear father, I love you; I love you still. You know the stroke was accidental, and I can bear witness that it was; but,

— then, — your *own* death. Was *that* accidental! I was sleeping at my mother's side when that happened; — your blood fell upon me! My God, what a life of horror has been mine!" and, quitting him, she fell upon the sofa, her head upon her mother's bosom, fondly pressed to that bosom by her now weeping parent.

Victorina did not weep; but in a short time, some change seemed to take place in her mind, for she added, taking and kissing her mother's hand, "Are these tears to welcome my return? We must dry them. We must have no tears now; all must be joy and happiness. My poor husband did not live to see England again. Had he, how truly blessed would this meeting have been."

"Here is a return of reason surely," observed Donna Sobrino to Zulvago. To which he merely replied, — "Attend, — and do not speak."

"Yes," continued the daughter, "I did love him, tenderly, truly; I never loved any on this earth, that is, really loved any other persons, — you my

mother held the very first place in my heart, my husband the second."

"And your God," observed her mother,— "should He not rather, as I have ever told you, hold the *first* place in your heart?" At this most natural observation, Zulvago by a motion of his head expressed the deepest regret, and addressing Donna Sobrino, said — "Gabrielle, my love, did I not warn you to listen, and not speak!"

The event proved he was right: from that hour, Victorina never had but one lucid interval. — With a glare of horror upon her mother, she drew back, thrusting her violently away with both hands; when at a signal given by Zulvago, we rose to be in readiness.

"And you, you, too, join in reproaching me, do you?" she continued wildly, — "has not my conscience been a sufficient torment? — my remorse amply profound? — was it not this, — this reflection, that set my brain on fire? When my husband died, and I was still but half-way on our return to England, did not one dreadful conviction come to my heart, the con-

viction that, previous to my marriage, so elated, so transported was I at the idea of being suddenly lifted up from a groveling state of poverty and dependence, that, more than once, I had, on my knees, when imploring the Almighty to bless my husband, also prayed that I might not *survive him!*

“ I *have* survived him, you will say ;” and she breathed with difficulty, gasping in convulsion — “ Yes, I have survived him ; but *he is not yet buried*. And, as certain as that there is a God in heaven, who heard my prayer, so certain am I that my husband and I shall be buried together in one grave, and in less than four-and-twenty hours. Was it not this that made me hasten forward ? — this, this,” she continued, clasping her mother round the neck, and kissing her, passionately, “ to see you again, to see you once more, did I not precipitate my journey with the haste of a mad woman ? though Heaven knows I am not such ; and still, as I pursued my frantic course, feeling death in my heart, I cried, ‘ On ! on ! or I shall be too late ! ’ ”

It was then, my dear Sir Eliot, that the scene became most painful ; for the mother had now caught the alarm. She understood it all. No longer attending to the advice of Zulvago, but giving way to the sudden impulse of maternal anguish, she snatched in her turn Victorina to her bosom, crying, “ My child, my child, I will not lose you. You must not, shall not die !”

“ There !” said the daughter, turning to us individually, with a smiling and satisfied look of confidence and pleasure ; “ There ! I told you so. Did I not tell you I should not die ? I said that death should not overtake me ; nor shall he yet these twenty years ; for my mother and I intend to be very happy yet, — so happy ;” and she sighed deeply ; — “ and, for the first time in our lives.” Then, affecting to whisper her mother, whilst looking at us, we heard the words of “ Aran-juez,” and “ Cottage,” and “ Tagus.” “ It would be rather singular,” she continued, “ if we had contrived for so many years, to exist in wretchedness and poverty, and that, now that we are rich,

we should die. You have heard that we are rich, my mother. You must have heard that. Oh, what days and years of happiness we will spend together yet, to make up for the past !”

She stopped, and shuddered ; then shrieked, and paused. — “ That pang is past ; another heart-string broken. Now hold me fast, mother ! — Grasp me tight. Now, now, don’t let go your hold ;” and, slowly, she moved her eyes round the room.

At this moment, a gentle knock at the door attracted our attention. On my father going to it, the landlady, who stood without, acquainted him that a room was ready for the sick travelling lady ; and one of the waiters immediately following, said, “ Here is Mr. X——, mentioning a medical person of the neighbourhood, who had already attended Donna Sobrino, when wounded by the footpad. He was instantly introduced ; when Zulvago, as if it were no longer requisite for him to stand centinel over the actions of Mrs. Hamilton, rose, and spoke to the surgeon.

“ Bleeding, sir, is the first thing to be thought of,” said the latter ; and he began at a distant table the necessary preparations, saying to us, “ You need not, gentlemen, retire, for I shall cause the lady to be removed at once to her chamber.”

Sudden and violent screams followed ; when the maniac, for such Victorina had really now become, still gazed slowly round the room, looking on vacancy.

“ He’s come !” she cried, “ He *is* come ! He has overtaken me ; and at the moment, when, for the first time in my life, I wished to live. I have called on death, and he now faces me. Don’t you see him ? — Hide me, — hold me ! Oh, my mother ! You a mother, and not prevent me being torn from you, — and for ever ! Grasp me hard. Death is here ! He has found me, even in my mother’s arms. He now lays hold upon me : he tears me ; he drags me. Oh, Isidore, help me ! I forgive the past ; — I forgive all the past. You love my mother ; — can you see me taken from her ? Dear, dear Isidore, oh, save me ! Oh

God — my God forgive me — hear my repentance — receive my spirit !”

At this appeal, Don Zulvago approaching her tenderly, supported her in his arms ; — the spasms returned — she looked alternately at her mother and Zulvago, and seizing a hand of each, put one within the other, as if bequeathing her wretched parent to his protection. She attempted to speak — the most violent struggles ensued — she was literally wrestling with death — her youth and strength attempting to overcome him, but it would not do — her hour was come — she once more clasped the neck of Donna Sobrino ; and when, a few moments after, Zulvago attempted to raise her from the bosom of her mother, she was dead !

The remainder is told, my dear Sir Eliot, in few words ; we of course left the room immediately, and shortly after were informed by Romeri of the arrival from town of Doctor B——, Zulvago’s medical friend, and a foreign gentleman,

whom we concluded was a Catholic divine ; but they were too late. Within twelve hours from that time, the hearse, containing the remains of Colonel Hamilton, stopped at the inn, under the very windows of the chamber of death, as if to claim the body of his deceased wife.

They are buried—and in one grave.—Zulvago, as chief mourner, was supported by Dr. B——, my father, and myself.

Donna Sobrino, as heir to her daughter, has administered to her large property, and moreover made her own will, of which her Spanish friend, the Doctor, and my father are executors. She appears calm and resigned ; and Zulvago feels secure of her restoration to health and future peace of mind. May he prove as correct in his judgment in this case, as in that of poor Mrs. Hamilton ! but herein we all secretly concur in thinking that he deceives himself. — Might we be allowed to pronounce upon

the future, we should say, that the heart of his Gabrielle is broken.

Adieu, dearest, best of friends. — Still talk of me to Claudy. Tell Mrs. Grantley never to forget me ; and believe me,

Ever your affectionate,

DUDLEY CLONMORE.

LETTER LX.

Sir Eliot Howard to the Rev. Henry Clonmore.

Euphorbia, Teneriffe.

It is now upwards of three weeks, my dear Clonmore, since I heard from England, and as you may imagine, feel rather anxious to learn how you all go on. I received with great pleasure the journal of Dudley's continental tour which he sent me about a week since, and am truly happy that Cavendish and your other sons enjoyed together so pleasant an excursion; even my Claudy observed, she should have had no objection to have made one of the party, provided her aunt Alford had gone.

I am rather surprised and disappointed that Dudley did not, when he was abroad, particularly in Spain, (though they all appear, under the convoy of the captain,

to have flown over half-a-dozen countries like a flock of wild geese, without giving themselves time for much observation,) that he had not made some enquiry after Zulvago. I can hear no accounts of him whatever ; and, from his long silence and continued absence, really fear some accident must have befallen him. I saw an account in the papers of Mrs. Hamilton's marriage ; and have only to hope, that through her means, on her return to England, her mother may be restored to the wishes of our friend.

And now we are on the subject of constancy, if Dudley supposes that his love for Claudy will last until he obtains, by his own personal and mental abilities, an independent fortune, high consideration in the world, a seat in parliament, and the title of Baron as a step to higher honours, I fear, poor fellow, he will find his heart wofully in the lurch ! — With respect to Claudy, I scarcely know how to determine : she now perfectly understands the lover she

has to deal with, and comprehends that it is his fixed intention to accept her hand, in about twenty or thirty years.

Penelope herself never underwent a greater trial ; but away with jesting, — and really I am in no great jesting humour, — when I reflect on the state of the case ; for though my daughter conducts herself exactly as I could wish, it is in vain to deny that her cheeks have lost their roses, and her blue eyes their lustre. — She loves Dudley ; she feels, and keenly, her disappointment, or wherein would consist her merit ; her good humour, her industry, her cheerfulness, being invariable : — she continues to be the daily comfort of her aunt, thus evincing her gratitude for the anxious care and fondness which my sister has shown her since her childhood ; and to me, she is a real blessing.

Every action being the result of piety, and conformable to the strictest rules laid down in the Holy Text ; my daughter does not yield to melancholy regret ; she neither poisons the present by comparing it with the past, nor dwells upon visions,

whether sad or otherwise, of the future. From day to day, she says to her Creator, "Thy will be done;" and looks upon what passes during that day, as the consummation of that Divine Will.

I am most dear to her; her aunt Grantley is affectionately regarded; and Dudley is still, and ever will be, loved; but the best affections of her soul are given to her Maker, and nothing, I am convinced, merely sublunary, can inspire her with a feeling of utter despair. — The loss of health, of friends, of fortune, might grieve her; but she can never feel overwhelming misery, until, by self-condemnation, she should be convinced she has lost the favour of the Almighty. — His protection, His grace, and His guidance in even every *worldly* concern, as well as those of a *spiritual* nature, are daily, and perhaps hourly implored (for from childhood, she has known the value of mental prayer, at all times, and in all places); and thus has Claudy learned to meet this truly severe trial, for so youthful, so fond, so sensible a heart, with piety and resignation.

Your last letter, Clonmore, and that of Dudley, are arrived. I received them yesterday. Their contents are indeed melancholy! — Poor Zulvago! though the original cause of his own wretchedness, I cannot but pity him, and hope that happier days await him in a union with Gabrielle.

In the death of Mrs. Hamilton, we trace the finger of God; and my dear friend, through my life, I have seen, and I doubt not you have made the same observation, that we are oftener the cause of our own miseries, by unwarrantable murmurs, by impious invocations, and by desperate vows to Heaven, than may seem, to a casual observer, even possible.

Among my own most intimate friends and acquaintances, I have taken an interest in observing this, and could almost venture to stand forth the asserter of a belief, that every sinful, and every pious, nay, every unguarded wish we utter is instantly registered by a

supernatural power ; and that we reap the consequence in its certain, its inevitable fulfilment. Otherwise, how vain and indefinite is that universal exclamation on hearing of accidents or casualties falling on individuals or nations, — that such are judgments from Heaven? — in short, to explain myself in the best and clearest manner, let me repeat the words of truth : we ask, and it is given (be it good or evil) ; we knock, and it is opened to us ; we seek, and are permitted to find.

The gong at the flag-staff sounds, announcing the arrival of strangers ; and I quit my letter to enquire who, at this late hour, ventures to besiege our castle ; for my spirits now are such, my dear Clonmore, that they will not admit of much, or scarcely any company, at Euphorbia ; indeed, of late, my society has been confined to that of the Balfours, and Mr. and Mrs. Turner ; the latter couple occasionally residing with us a month at a time.

The gong continues to sound, and the bell to ring. I must break off—I shall resume this letter at the first opportunity.

My gracious God, I thank thee! thou hast heard my prayers, thou hast restored me once more to life, and happiness. Now indeed are my words fully verified. My daily petition is granted—the door of peace is once more opened to me—I have sought good, and I have found it.

On quitting my study yesterday morning, I went, as quickly as illness and general debility of body and mind would permit, to the library, where I found my sister, and alone.

“Who can have arrived?” remarked Jane; and, unable to reply, I sat down near her, gasping, with my eyes turned upon the door.—Slowly and cautiously it soon after opened, and Zulvago appeared! without closing it after him, he came over, and in silence seated himself at my side.

After a short pause, during which I held out my hand, which he grasped most feelingly, he observed, having first spoken to my sister, "You are ill, Sir Eliot, and very ill."

"Oh, no, no;" I replied, "only a little nervous—at my time of life, the nerves do not possess quite that vigour which they could boast of twenty years ago."

"I," replied Zulvago, "am by some years older than you, Sir Eliot, yet am not nervous."

"But you, my friend, Major Hernandez,—you are a soldier, and have no right to any nerves; though, by the by, you military men contrive, in some way or other, to possess the most tender and kind of all hearts."

"Why, mine has of late been tried, I allow," he answered; and, after a short pause, during which he appeared as if conquering some deep and internal emotion, he acquainted me that he purposed to settle at Teneriffe for the remainder of his life. You may imagine the pleasure this gave me; and I re-

minded him, that though the morning and meridian of his days had been dreary and overcast; yet that the evening promised fair, and I trusted that he would close his existence in calm and cheering sunshine.

“And now, my friend,” I said, “though I have hitherto avoided a question of a nearer nature, I hope I am not deceived—you are, I trust, a married man, and your interesting friend has accompanied you hither.—You are not alone—you have brought your wife with you—you are surely not alone.”

No,” he replied, “I am not alone—she *is* with me; I brought her with me; we shall never more be parted—I quit Teneriffe no more; I shall purchase lands here, and perhaps build.”

“Bravo!” I said, forcing a smile upon my haggard cheek. “Well, and have you left your lady behind you at Orotava?—or is she here?” I said, looking towards the door, which I observed was a-jar,—“Come, Zulvago, introduce me at

once, to your Gabrielle, to the Countess d'Almeida — where is she ?”

“ In her coffin,” he replied.

The shock was great, and I knew not how I looked, or what I said ; when he continued, with the air of a man, who has no longer a single hope or wish in this lower world,

“ We *were* united, and at my most earnest entreaty, on her death bed ; — I had scarcely placed the marriage ring upon her finger, and received this mourning one in return — (showing it on his hand,) the broken hearted Gabrielle and I, had only time to exchange the names of husband, and of wife, when she expired in my arms.”

Perceiving that I was still unable to speak, he continued, “ All that remains to be told nearly concerns yourself, Sir Eliot. By the will of Gabrielle, made before our marriage, and since legally ratified by me, Dudley, her friend in distress, my young friend Dudley, inherits the whole of the property, which, as heir-at-law to her daughter, became hers.”

This news was as surprising as it was unexpected. — After some consideration, — “ I am pleased for his sake,” I replied, mournfully ; “ but he is not in the slightest degree dearer to me now, than he was when penniless, and the son of my adoption. I know not, Zulvago, whether I did not prefer him as such ; my fortune, with only one child, being already princely. I loved the boy for his own sake, Claudy loves him still at this time, when considered wholly dependent upon me ; and had I my choice, I would rather have seen him wedded to her, not master of ten pounds in the world (except what was derived from me), than now, (were he even to come here again, and offer himself,) the master of thousands. — He was then my *chosen*, he now becomes the *chooser*.”

Zulvago took my hand, and I saw in his looks something expressive of pleasure. “ I find,” he said, “ that my destiny is to enjoy happiness only by reflection ; whilst all around me grasp the substance of bliss, to me is only left its shadow — but in the sight of the happi-

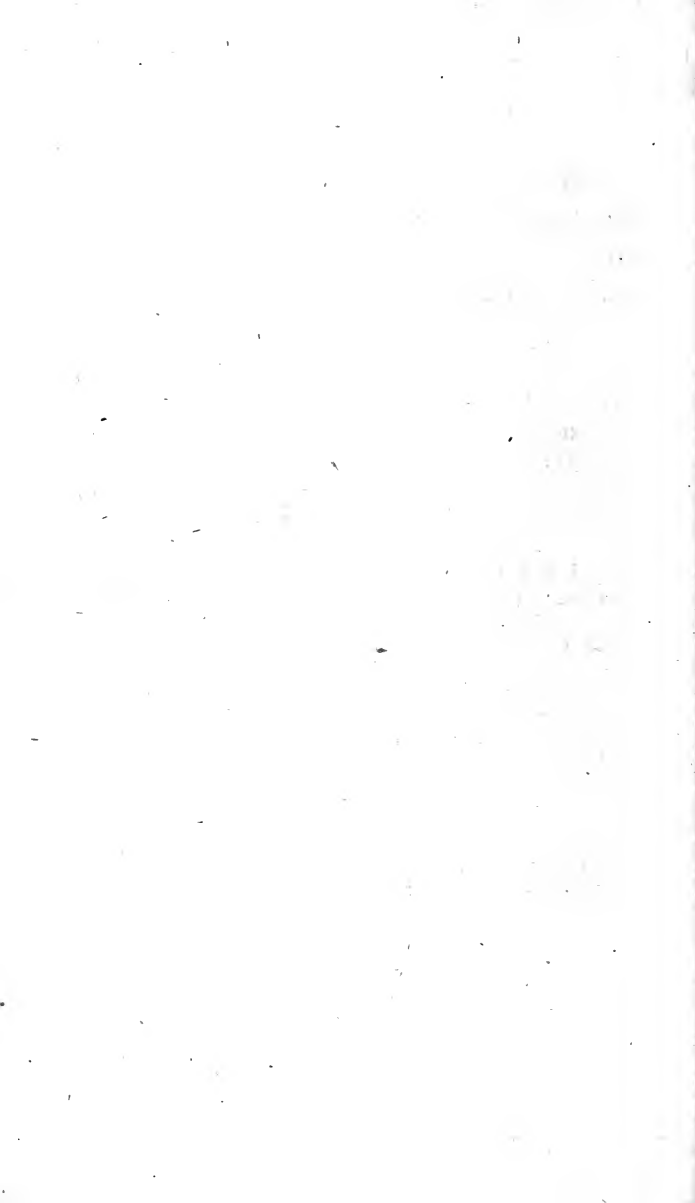
ness of my fellow-creatures, there are still most enviable feelings! — Well then, Sir Eliot, you have your choice : — Your Dudley received this fortune, it is true, but is no longer in possession of it ; nay, I almost doubt if he has even the ten pounds in the world, which you say you would wish your son-in-law to be master of. He has, by my connivance and assistance, I confess, legally contrived to dispossess himself of the whole ; and you will allow that it is easier to get rid of fifty thousand pounds, than to acquire it. He has increased his father's income, settled an annuity on his mother, portioned his sisters, befriended his brothers, and bestowed a sum on the Spanish chapel ; and returns to you and Teneriffe, the very same orphan of your bounty, the dependent on your generosity, the son of your adoption, as when he quitted it.”

This, Clonmore, was to me a moment of more sure and waking bliss than in my life I had known equalled ! — “ And where,” I said, “ where, is he now ?”

“ Here ! my father, here, my dear, dear, Sir Eliot ! ” The door was thrown open, and I clasped once more, to my nearly fainting heart, my most beloved boy.

At the same moment, the drawing-room door behind us was opened hastily ; when I heard him exclaim, “ My Claudy ! ” She ran to meet his fond embrace ; and whilst in tears and silent rapture, they firmly, yet silently held each to the other’s fond and tender bosom, with my hands upon their heads, I blessed them both ; and then taking the hand of my darling child, I placed it in that of her DUDLEY.

THE END.



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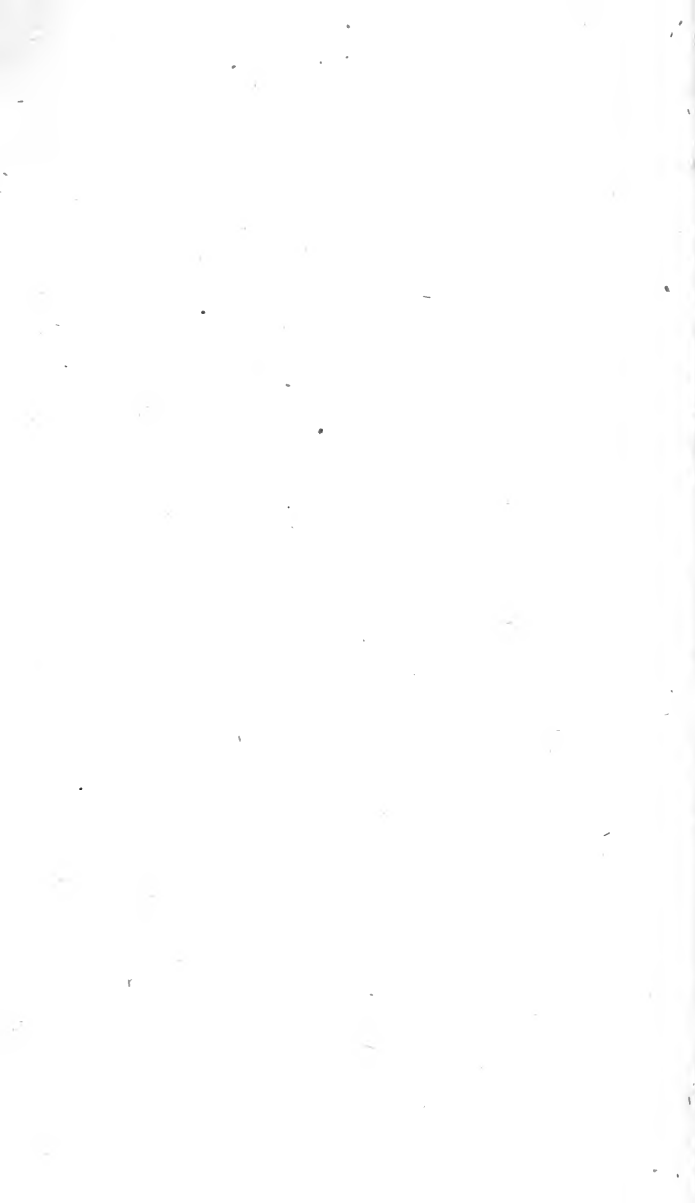
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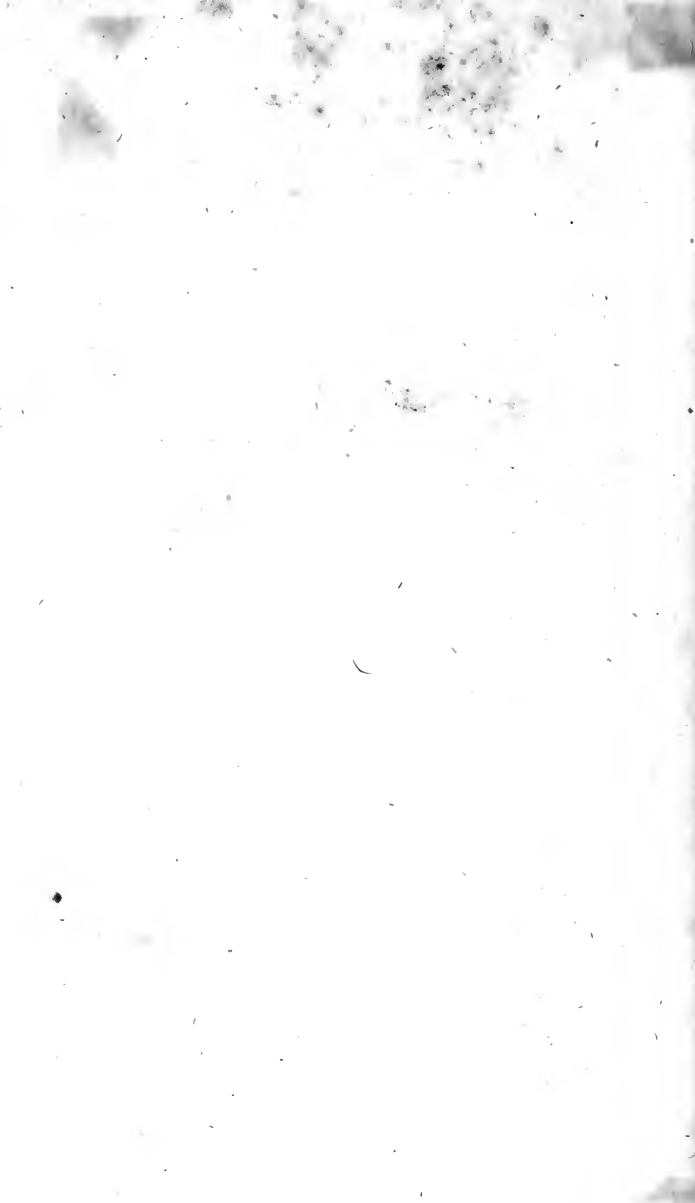
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